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THE PRESIDENT returned from his fishing trip with his chief political advisers—Senators Harrison and Robinson, Vice-President Garner, Speaker Byrns, and Jim Farley—with plans laid to veto the Patman bill or any other measure providing for immediate payment of the bonus. He apparently believes the veterans will not be vengeful if defeated, because they are divided by party lines, and because he is certain the Republican candidate in the next election will not promise immediate payment. He probably concludes he stands to lose little by a firm veto, and to gain much with those who will be worried in the next campaign by his spending program. Whether the combined forces of the inflationists and the Legion can override the veto in the Senate remains to be seen at this writing. They make a powerful combination, one which if frustrated by the President today might be rallied into a radical third-party movement if the third-party leaders could unite on a simplification of programs. That is why Father Coughlin is directing the bombardment by telegraph of the White House, and Huey Long is leading the Senate fight for the bonus. But Father Coughlin has repudiated Long's share-the-wealth program, evidently feeling himself strong enough to draw the Kingfish into his retinue on his own terms. While we do not expect an early consolidation of third-party forces, the combination of veterans and inflationists would establish a national radical bloc that would be a dangerous approximation to national socialism.

THE MEN around the President have not yet agreed how to spend the four-billion-dollar works-relief appropriation. Two schools of opinion are vying for control. The one led by Harry Hopkins is pressing for literal fulfilment of the President's promise to find work for every able-bodied person on relief. This entails the hurried creation of projects which will do little to stimulate the capital-goods industry. The other, led by Fred Walker, General Wood, and Secretary Ickes, believes that slower spending, if it creates a greater demand for durable goods, is preferable, and that relief need not be stressed. It is therefore urging a long-term public-works program which adds to the national income and wealth of the nation. The President must decide whether to abandon Mr. Hopkins or to authorize what amounts to a revival on a vast scale of the CWA. If he heeds the voice of business and concentrates on recovery he will of necessity aggravate the privation of millions of families. If he holds to his thesis of finding work for all he runs into the certainty that he must ask Congress for another great works-relief appropriation when this one is exhausted. So far he has not slackened in his support of Hopkins, who now ranks as the chief authority in the spending administration. Natural personal rivalries explain some of the drive to reduce Hopkins's program, but it also expresses a profound desire on the part of business to improve business first without emphasis on human needs. If the President were not committed to the abandonment of cash relief, he could accept the long-term public-works program and still maintain a tolerable standard of life for the unemployed. Now either choice is bound to be unsatisfactory, and he undoubtedly will make whichever offers the best political returns.

ONLY the most vigorous action by the League Council at the meeting on May 20 can avert war between Italy and Abyssinia. The recent report of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs not only alludes to the possibility of such a war, but actively sets about creating a war psychology by enumerating in detail the occasions on which Abyssinia is alleged to have violated its treaty obligations with Rome. Although the report quotes the noted French colonial administrator, General Lyautey, to the effect that it is advisable to show one's strength in order not to have to use it, it adds ominously "that it is completely out of keeping with Fascist style to have force at hand and not to use it." Two divisions of the Italian army are already in Africa, and four others are being prepared for war service. Three of Italy's most capable generals are now on duty in the African colonies. Alarmed by these preparations, Abyssinia has threatened to mobilize its forces if the Council fails to act. Unconfirmed reports suggest that European munitions makers are already doing a flourishing business with the African kingdom. All of this puts the League in an extremely embarrassing position. The recent rapproche-

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ment between Italy and France and the necessity of maintaining a united front against Germany make it difficult for the powers to interfere with Italy's imperialist ambitions, even if they desired to do so. On the other hand, failure of the League to take definite action on an issue as clear-cut as this would destroy the moral basis for possible future punitive measures against German aggression.

ONE OF THE ARGUMENTS against dictatorship is that when the dictator dies he leaves a heritage of conflict. Poland without Pilsudski must now put that reasoning to the test. The Marshal was not a tyrant except on occasion and for limited objectives, as when he "pacified" the Ukraine with cold-blooded barbarism, followed by an immediate appeasement. He was one of the ablest statesmen thrown up by the creation of Europe's new nationalities after the war. Minorities make up twelve million of his country's thirty million people, and he understood how to punish and cajole them while the Polish state was being forged. With the same skill in foreign policy he gave Poland a breathing time of independence by playing back and forth between Germany and Russia, a delicate undertaking which would have baffled a lesser man. It is significant that he was not the creator of Polish independence, his policy at the outbreak of the war having been to gain Polish autonomy within the German Empire; that is, he did not judge the future optimistically enough, a fact for which history no doubt will somewhat disparage him. But he became the dominating force in the new country, created its military strength, and gave it unity. A jealous, arbitrary, gruff, and sinister man, he won the esteem of his countrymen by his accomplishments. That after passing from socialism to ultra-nationalism in his personal evolution he ended by providing his country with one of the worst constitutions in the world must count heavily against him. But the judgment will be tempered by the fact that if he was not the first to dream the new Poland, he realized it chiefly through his own rugged character.

THE CONSEQUENCES of Pilsudski's death cannot be foretold until the inevitable conflict for the succession has been fought through. None of the second-string men about the Marshal was of any real stature, the overrated Colonel Beck included. Beck, Pristor, several times Prime Minister, and Slawek, the present Prime Minister, will vie with one another for leadership. Pristor is the best of the lot, and has more than average political ability. Probably the ablest of Pilsudski's lieutenants is General Rydz-Smigly, who would have played a much greater part had not the Marshal been jealous of his popularity with the army. He would be the natural nominee to succeed Pilsudski if it were not certain that Beck, Pristor, and Slawek will unite to keep him down. Poland has been ruled for some years by the non-party bloc which Pilsudski created, but no one but he could have held it together. Its decline will give the National Democratic Party a golden opportunity to come back. Dmowski, its leader, signed the Versailles treaty, which created Poland, and he can make telling use of the fact that he was fighting for Poland's independence in days when Pilsudski was content with autonomy. Dmowski's party is reactionary, anti-Semitic, anti-minority, and bitterly anti-German. Should he come into power, the days of friendship with Germany will be brief, and Poland would be easily lured into partnership in the new Franco-Soviet pact. The return of Dmowski would also mean a revival of party politics, in itself a desirable enough change, though safer at a later time. The place of that admirable, non-political chemist, President Moscicki, though he is vested with enormous power under the new constitution, is negligible. He has been no more than Pilsudski's executant, and will perform the same services for whoever wins the succession.

WE DOUBT whether many Americans have been made war-minded by the naval and air maneuvers centering in Hawaii, but we are alarmed by their effect on the Japanese. The dispatch of an enormous air fleet west of Hawaii was announced without explanation, and must have appeared like a fist thrust under Japan's nose. That this westward flight was to be a mock attack by an "enemy" on Hawaii was announced later, and the Japanese could quiet themselves by the thought that if we did want a war in the Pacific we were concerned about our ability to hold Hawaii. War maneuvers mean a great deal to professional fighters, who are not to be censured for wishing to perform in the Pacific under as nearly warlike conditions as possible. But the air force and navy are instruments of the government and it is for the government to decide what latitude is to be allowed them. We see no possible excuse for these Pacific tests. They are inflammatory in the highest degree; and they do not safeguard the United States, for only a fool can believe that the Japanese, engrossed with their problem on the continent of Asia, will provoke a war with us. We regret the accident which caused several casualties at Pearl Harbor. They must be written down as a far more inexcusable waste of life than the disasters that occurred when the air-mail contracts were canceled. At that time, at least, an issue of public service was involved.

THE SACRAMENTO *BEE*, recipient of the Pulitzer prize for journalism, has surpassed in toxic content even the Hearst papers in California on such subjects as the release of Tom Mooney and the recent Sacramento criminal-syndicalism case. It was a reporter for this paper who, during the Sacramento trial, slipped a note to Albert Goldman, Non-Partisan Labor Defense attorney, apologizing in advance for the fact that the *Bee* would distort the report of his speech to the jury. Without the background of pressure and agitation provided by the *Bee* the jury might never have arrived at the verdict which acquitted six and convicted eight equally innocent defendants. Two of the jurors held out sixty-six hours for acquittal but finally accepted a compromise which included a recommendation that Norman Mini of the Workers' Party and Lorine Norman of the Communist Party be put on probation. This was the best trade that could be made with the reactionary majority. The convicted defendants are now in prison, Norman Mini and Lorine Norman having refused probation. Appeals for the convicted eight are being prepared by the International Labor Defense and the Non-Partisan Labor Defense. An affidavit by H. S. McIntire, one of the two jurors who held out for acquittal, that the verdict was the result of a "horse trade" in the jury room should alone be sufficient evidence to produce a reversal in the higher court. In view of the Mooney case, however, it is unsafe to be too optimistic. As for the prize-winning *Bee*, it hailed the verdict as a triumph of justice and denounced "the liberal weeklies" which printed the truth about the trial.

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SOME WEEKS AGO the *Williams Record*, the student newspaper of Williams College, circulated a petition calling on the manager of the local theater to cease showing the Hearst Metrotone News because of its ill-concealed militaristic propaganda. Before the petition was presented, the manager voluntarily withdrew the Hearst reel. Immediately a procession of interested visitors descended upon Williamstown, bent on ferreting out the *Record's* Moscow connections. They included the publisher of the Boston *Record*, a tabloid carrying Hearst features; a reporter from the Boston *American*, admittedly Hearst-owned; the son of the editor of *Liberty*; and a representative of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer interests. As it turned out, they might better have stayed at home. If Stalin has ever heard of Williams College, his agents have been careful not to leave documents around for enterprising reporters to pick up. Even the manager proved adamant. Unwilling to court trouble with the students, he resisted all efforts to force him to reconsider his decision. Meanwhile, the Association of College Editors took up the battle. Copies of the petition were mailed to the eighty-nine college papers affiliated with the association. The first to follow the *Record's* example was the *Daily Princetonian*, which hastened to launch a petition of its own accord. At Wesleyan the cinema proprietors had already agreed to expurgate jingoistic items from their newsreels. In several other colleges the student newspapers have given editorial support to the campaign. Needless to say, our sympathy lies with the students, not only because their rebuke to Mr. Hearst is well deserved, but especially because we find in their action a healthy sign that students are coming to recognize social responsibilities beyond the campus.

THE *AMERICAN MERCURY* strikers have won a complete victory before the Regional Labor Board. The board found that the discharge of the two secretaries "can only be interpreted as a threat to other union employees and so in violation of Section 7-a as embodied in the Graphic Arts Code." It recommended that the Office Workers' Union be recognized as the collective-bargaining agency, and that all the strikers "be reinstated immediately without prejudice and with back pay." In reply the management issued a statement typical of reactionary employers everywhere, denying all the findings of the board and adding that the *Mercury* "refuses to see its business taken over and managed by its employees or by a union or by the United States government," and that the whole procedure of the Regional Labor Board "is but a short step to an open attack on the freedom of the press." It is reported that the publisher and editor of the *Mercury* will "fight the case to the Supreme Court if necessary." If they carry out this threat and fail to reinstate the strikers, they will have lined up with those reactionary newspapers which are content to purvey generous ideas in their pages while resisting legally established standards in their own offices.

THE LAST PUBLIC HEARING of the Aldermanic Committee investigating relief in New York City was enlivened by the appearance of Park Commissioner Robert Moses, who added to the mounting evidence of inefficiency and almost incredible red tape in the municipal relief organizations. He suggested that work relief be taken over entirely by the federal government, and that home relief be left to the state and city. Surely this would be a better arrangement than the one now in effect, under which all three agencies are involved in the minutest items of purchase. He urged that work relief be conducted along the broad lines of the CWA, which, in his opinion as in ours, "was getting somewhere" just when the Roosevelt Administration dropped it. Further public hearings of the investigating committee will probably not be held, because the original appropriation of $25,000 has almost run out, and there is little possibility that additional money will be voted. For this all intelligent people should be grateful. The investigation was from the beginning a bluff on the part of Tammany to enable it to get its hands on the 12,000 jobs involved. The hearings have disclosed little of importance which was not previously known. Not a single instance of large-scale graft has been exposed, and not a single official has been proved grossly dishonest or wilfully negligent. On the other hand, the investigators have barely said a word about the insufficiency of relief funds, the denial of the right of collective bargaining to relief employees, or sectional discrimination.

WHILE ENGLAND celebrated its Jubilee, the unemployed of its oldest dominion and newest crown colony, Newfoundland, rioted in a demonstration for work relief. Nearly a year and a half has elapsed since the island's desperate financial plight led it voluntarily to relinquish its dominion status and accept the rule of a commission appointed by the king. The move has apparently been satisfactory from the standpoint of the British bondholders, but the improvement in the island's credit position has been achieved by means of drastic governmental economies which have adversely affected a large share of the population. Relief has been grossly inadequate. Labor conditions are said by competent observers to be worse than at any other period in Newfoundland's history. As the chief cause of the island's plight is to be found in the decline of international trade, it is evident that the solution of its difficulties lies deeper than mere constitutional changes. Responsibility for the necessary adjustment must be placed at the door of Great Britain.

THE Woodrow Wilson Foundation has awarded its gold medal to President Masaryk of Czecho-Slovakia in recognition of "his unceasing struggle for the rights of individual human beings against tyrants who would usurp them, of classes against social injustice and exploitation, and of nationalities against the domination of alien rulers." This is an excellent choice in this hour of fascist menace. Certainly President Masaryk's steadfastness when surrounded by dictatorships is worthy of the highest praise and all possible recognition. He has been sorely beset on many sides, and he must daily be aware of the growing sympathy for Hitlerism among the Bohemians of German descent. None the less he has so far declined to suspend anyone's rights or to accept the extraordinary doctrine recently enunciated by Walter Lippmann, among others, that it is justifiable for democracy to violate free speech and free press in order to preserve them! We note with gratitude also the foundation's gifts of $4,000 to the University in Exile, and of $3,000 apiece to the League of Women Voters and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

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The Court Rules Out Security

THE Supreme Court of the United States has laid its paralyzing hand upon the Railroad Retirement Act in such a way as to prevent all compulsory pension schemes except those based on the use of the government's taxing power. Not only is the present act unconstitutional, but any other attempt to provide security for employees in interstate commerce by required contributions to pension funds is beyond the power of Congress. The court held that in regulating commerce between the states Congress may consider only efficiency and safety in transportation. Social problems created by the displacement or retirement of vast armies of employees must become so serious as to interfere with transportation before Congress may act. The procedure clearly indicated in the opinion of Justice Roberts is to allow the situation first to get so completely out of hand that something like a general strike impends. Then, under the famous decision of Wilson *vs.* New (in which the Adamson Act establishing an eight-hour day to avoid a general railroad strike was sustained), it may be held that the emergency justifies such sudden and hastily considered action as seems necessary. But any planning which might prevent emergencies is beyond the power of Congress.

The court puts this suggestion indirectly:

> The legislation considered in Wilson *vs.* New was drafted to meet a particular exigency, and its validity depended upon circumstances so unusual that this court's decision respecting it cannot be considered as a precedent here.

Had the Supreme Court invalidated the Retirement Act on the ground that the cost was greater than the railroads could bear and thus constituted an undue burden on interstate commerce, their action would have been understandable however great the difference of opinion about the facts. In the face of such a decision Congress might have amended the act either by reducing the pensions or contributing to the fund through taxation. But Justice Roberts expressly discards this basis for the decision. "We are not prepared," he says, "to hold that if the law were in other respects within the legislative competence, the enormous cost involved would invalidate it."

The complete lack of common sense in a theory of government which rewards only the disorderly and acts only after an emergency is not the concern of the court, which, it asserts, must take the Constitution as it finds it. Justice Roberts points this out clearly: "Though we should think the measure embodies a valuable social plan and be in entire sympathy with its purpose and intended results, if the provisions go beyond the boundaries of constitutional power we must so declare." (There is an implication here that Justices Hughes, Brandeis, Stone, and Cardozo either do not understand constitutional law or have shirked their duty, but perhaps, since the logical paradox involved in declaring acts unconstitutional by five-to-four decisions has never been satisfactorily resolved, it was not intended.) Having established this point, Justice Roberts proceeds throughout his lengthy decision to discuss little else than the wisdom and desirability of the act and its separate provisions. The government, urging that pensions do have something to do with the efficiency of railroads, produced affidavits in court to show that a sense of security among employees induces a morale which is indispensable to the functioning of a great organization. Justice Roberts replies that morale is based on gratitude. Therefore "the surest way to destroy it in any privately owned business is to substitute legislative largess for private bounty and thus transfer the drive for pensions to the halls of Congress and transmute loyalty to employer into gratitude to the legislature."

The majority opinion is a curious document. It lacks the fire and moral conviction of the dissent in the gold cases. It is as dry as a common-law pleading, piling up objection after objection without any apparent sense of the relative importance of the points made. The fact that railroads are efficient today is used to prove that the problem of superannuated employees has nothing to do with the efficiency of railroads. It is a combination of pure fantasy and legal syllogisms with little persuasive power, but its bland assumptions that railroads are just little groups of private individuals and that the security of employees has nothing to do with efficient organization must shock any realistic mind.

We may be grateful for the irritating effect of the decision upon Chief Justice Hughes, whose dissent is the boldest, frankest, indeed, the greatest opinion of his career. He is alive to the danger involved in the sweeping generalizations of the majority, which emasculate the power of the legislature over commerce. In his opening paragraph he says:

> The gravest aspect of the decision is that it does not rest simply upon a condemnation of particular features of the Railroad Retirement Act, but denies to Congress the power to pass any compulsory pension act for railroad employees. . . . That is a conclusion of such serious and far-reaching importance that it overshadows all other questions raised by the act. . . . I think that the conclusion thus reached is a departure from sound principles and is an unwarranted limitation upon the commerce clause of the Constitution.

What will be the effect of this decision? While it does not appear to put any obstacles in the way of pension plans the funds for which are raised by taxation, many informed persons fear that Justice Roberts has revealed such an ingrained hostility to pensions—as undeserved "bounties" or "largess"—that he may find a way to dispose even of acts which are based on the taxing power. The decision puts him in a key position. Everyone else seems to be accounted for. Van Devanter, Sutherland, McReynolds, and Butler are opposed to everything new. Hughes, Brandeis, Stone, and Cardozo may be depended upon to approve of any reasonable security plan. Roberts is unpredictable; the present opinion shows that he has little respect for former decisions of the court which interfere with his moral judgments. A dangerous lack of confidence and general morale on the part of those who are pushing pension plans is almost sure to result from this uncertainty. Indeed, this effect will be shared by all progressives. The menace of the Supreme Court will continue to hang like an ominous cloud over all legal attempts to solve the social problems that are crowding upon us.

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Wanted: A Labor Movement

THOSE who accepted the Wolman ballot in the automobile industry as proving the indifference of the workers to organized labor will have difficulty in explaining the strength of the Chevrolet strike in Toledo. Had it been timed a few months earlier it might have grown to establish the union throughout the industry, excepting probably Ford and a few smaller units, and exerted enough pressure to have enforced necessary reforms in wages and labor practices, among them the abolition of the Wolman board. Coming when it did, it served chiefly as a reminder of the opportunity still open to organized labor of entering this industry and enrolling its workers in an industrial labor movement.

It is a reminder which should not go unheeded. The record of the A. F. of L. in giving birth to and then crippling industrial unions is notorious. The steel workers, rank and file, are now sitting in their own secessionist organization, consigned to outlawed existence by the few thousand unionists still paying dues to the Amalgamated. The rebels came to Washington, begged for recognition from the A. F. of L. council, and were overwhelmingly defeated. The rubber workers, asking for an international charter, were told by the council that they would get it with "certain exceptions," these proving to be exceptions to benefit some twenty crafts. Not one of the industrial unions has yet obtained an international charter, which would provide autonomy and enable the union to set itself on its feet, independent of the indifferent leadership of the A. F. of L. In each instance the craft unions have shown their true nature by raiding the ranks of the new federal organizations. The delay in granting international charters is due principally to the refusal of the craft unions to forgo raiding. The American Federation of Labor lacks interest in a real labor movement, and its executive is without the experience to organize one. It is a relic of the Gompers era when craft unionism was doomed to be the substitute for a labor movement. Today, thanks in part to the new self-awareness awakened in labor by the New Deal, a labor movement is seen to be necessary not only for labor itself but for the survival of democracy.

It has grown increasingly clear this last year that a labor movement cannot be created from within the American Federation of Labor, and that secession of industrial unions from the A. F. of L. may be inevitable if the young industrial unions are to grow. Leadership will naturally fall to John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers and to Sidney Hillman of the needle trades. Lewis, being close to steel, would have to organize the steel industry. If the coal strike comes in June, it will probably spill over to the steel industry, and give him his opening. That would form a nucleus of industrial unions which might ultimately include seven groups—mining, steel, the needle trades, automobiles, rubber, textiles, and aluminum. The new unions have not been able to enlist help from the A. F. of L. That parental organization has acted like certain low forms of animal life which try to survive by eating their young.

A split in the A. F. of L. would probably mean a long and bitter feud which would last until the industrial unions had established themselves. Dread of this conflict may be restraining those who otherwise would throw themselves into the development of a labor movement. The craft character of the A. F. of L. is keeping labor in the old rut of trying to increase its power through legislative means. We do not criticize the legislative method, and we should rejoice if it won a victory in the passage of the Wagner labor-disputes bill. But this of itself would not insure the organization of the key industries, and it would be folly to rely on such a law to create for labor a power that can come only from action and organization. The October meeting of the A. F. of L. will see once more the struggle between craft habits and industrial potentialities. At San Francisco the industrial unions won only a hollow victory, and in the next session even this hollow victory may be forfeited. We are tempted to hope that it is, that the A. F. of L. goes back to the task it understands—craft unionism. That would leave the founding of a labor movement to those who are fitted for it by outlook and experience.

The evolution of a sordid machine civilization is rushing forward more rapidly under the depression than it did in the boom. Unless economic power in industry can be shared by labor with management, political democracy itself will have little reality. The development of a labor movement becomes one of the first essentials if the country is not to be managed altogether by industry and finance.

The Pulitzer Prizes

LAST year we complained that the Pulitzer Prize was rapidly losing whatever significance it may once have had. Contemplating now certain of the awards for 1935 we can think of only one happy solution to the difficulties which the committee has made for itself. Why not consolidate with that monthly department of *Vanity Fair* which is called "We Nominate for Oblivion"?

Of course there always are and always will be opportunities to quarrel with the specific choices of any prize committee. If, however, those choices are made upon the basis of any principles or prejudices, avowed or understood, then they can become the occasion for stimulating debate. But the whole trouble with the Pulitzer prizes is just that the complicated machinery for bestowing them has been so set up that the decision is bound to go, not to the person whom anyone is enthusiastic about, but to the writer against whom no one of a large number of "advisers" and "advisers to advisers" can raise any possible objection.

Mr. Pulitzer's intentions were doubtless of the best. He vested in the trustees of Columbia University the formal power to bestow the prizes, but the trustees have always left the choice in the hands of the Advisory Committee of the School of Journalism—a large, various, and widely scattered group of newspaper editors. These gentlemen, apparently realizing that they were hardly in a position to familiarize themselves with all the novels, poems, plays, biographies, histories, editorials, cartoons, and so forth produced during the year, wisely appointed certain groups of specialists to advise them, and up to this point the arrange-

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ments were sensible enough. Then, however, the Advisory Committee began, for mysterious reasons, to disregard the advice of the persons whom it had presumably appointed because it believed them in a better position than the committee itself to make a choice. Last year, when the so-called play jury found its selection snubbed for no apparent reason, it resigned in an understandable huff. Thereupon the Advisory Committee asked three other gentlemen to serve with the understanding that they should have power only to submit a list of eligible plays from which the committee itself would make a choice.

As usual the play award has aroused the most controversy, and thanks to that controversy we can see just how the system works. The "jurors"—John Erskine, William Lyon Phelps, and Stark Young—began by eliminating all the plays favored by one or more to which any of the three objected. This is said to have disposed immediately of "The Children's Hour," which Professor Phelps thought "unpleasant" but which had been generally regarded as the most prominent candidate for the prize. Presumably, other likely choices were ruled out in the same way, and a list of three plays, including "Personal Appearance" and "Merrily We Roll Along," was compiled. From this list—presumably again because no member of the Advisory Committee could think of any strong objection—"The Old Maid" was finally singled out. It is our opinion that either "The Children's Hour," "Awake and Sing," "The Petrified Forest," or "The Farmer Takes a Wife" would have been a more suitable choice than any play on the "jury's" list. But that is not the point. The point is that the play selected is neither good nor bad but exactly the sort of old-fashioned mediocrity which the method of selection almost inevitably singles out by the process of elimination.

The other winners were all perfectly safe, though some of the prizes happened to go to works of real merit. The "best biography," Douglas Freeman's "Robert E. Lee," is pretty universally respected, and so is the "best history," Charles McLean Andrews's "The Colonial Period of American History." Josephine Johnson's novel "Now in November" was not liked by *The Nation's* reviewer, but it was widely praised and moderately popular, while the prize volume of poems "Bright Ambush" is a collection of conventional if literate verse by an obscure poetess named Audrey May Wurdemann.

In the end it all comes down to a question of what the Pulitzer prizes are supposed to be for. The donor probably did not intend them specifically to encourage either radical thought or radical artistic experiments. There is no reason to insist that they should be used in the interests of any particular movement, and one may expect the standards to be fairly conservative. But it also seems safe to assume that Mr. Pulitzer wished the prizes to reward distinction. At present the recipient gets a gift of money. In addition the sale of his book is stimulated. We cannot see, however, that the prize means very much else either to the winners or to the public, and under the circumstances the phraseology of the awards should be modified. Instead of giving prizes to the "best play," the "best volume of poems," and so on, the committee should frankly say, "To the play undistinguished enough to meet no objection from either the play jury or the Advisory Committee, $1,000." And so on down the line.

In Reply to the *Times*

THE editorial comment in the New York *Times* of May 13 on *The Nation* Index of Labor Welfare does justice neither to the enterprise nor to the accuracy of that great newspaper. After commending this journal for performing a much-needed service in compiling a labor index, it raises a number of questions regarding the methods used in computing the index which could have been answered with comparative ease if the editorial writer had taken the trouble to make a telephone call. As in any weighted index, the details of computation are of such a technical nature as to be of interest only to those who are statistically minded. To such persons *The Nation* will be only too glad to give full explanation of its methods. The *Times* asks, for example, "How can individual weekly earnings be averaged against unemployment?" In this case the answer is relatively simple. The index of real wages is multiplied by the percentage of gainful workers who are employed at a given time to indicate the status of the employed portion of the population. This figure is given a four-fifths weight in the final index.

A further question raised by the *Times* is in connection with the use of the number on relief rolls as an indication of the plight of the unemployed. It suggests that a rise in relief rolls may sometimes mean an improvement in the position of labor. This objection has a certain amount of validity. There are, indeed, occasions when an increase in the number of persons on relief may only mean that the unemployed are being better cared for. But these instances are relatively few. Relief workers are almost unanimous in testifying that the majority of men and women do not apply for relief until their personal resources have been completely exhausted. And the index measures the number on the rolls, not the adequacy or inadequacy of the relief given. Perhaps the best proof of the legitimacy of this assumption is to be found in the sharp decrease in relief rolls during the months when the CWA was in operation.

However, the *Times* insists that "the greatest avoidable falsification of the index comes through its complete failure to take account of the reduction in working hours." It is true that *The Nation* Index takes no account of the fact "that hourly wage rates have been substantially raised." Needless to say, the omission is a deliberate one. The increase in hourly wages is merely a reflex of the reduction in the length of the working week. We do not deny that the decrease in the number of hours in the working week has been pleasant for labor, but we have excluded this consideration as irrelevant to an index dealing with the relative economic status of the working class. In a final attempt to explain away the unpleasant implications of *The Nation's* index, the *Times* itself indulges in "falsification." It takes the figures for *manufacturing* industries—where the improvement has been the greatest—and cites these figures as proof that *The Nation* Index, which covered all industry, could not be correct. As a matter of fact the very figures cited by the *Times*, with the exception of those on hours, form an integral portion of *The Nation* Index. The *Times* has merely lifted those which are most appropriate to its argument. It was this type of irresponsible use of statistics that *The Nation* hoped to eliminate through its index.

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Issues and Men

Senator Cutting

THE more one reflects upon the death of Senator Cutting the worse his loss seems. That is not to say that he was an intellectual or political giant, or that he was the most outstanding figure in the little group of Senators who decline to wear party chains. But he was a genuine liberal, a man who endeared himself to those who knew him best, and he was growing in intellectual stature. If it is true, as the press reported, that Senators Borah and Norris could not restrain their tears on hearing the news, that is about the finest tribute which could be paid to him, for they are much older men, veterans of the Senate, long accustomed to the incidents and accidents of life. I remember being in Senator Norris's office when the news came to him that Mr. Cutting's seat was to be contested by former Congressman Chavez, and that Postmaster General Farley obviously approved. The feeling Mr. Norris showed revealed a deep personal affection for his colleague.

Just what caused Mr. Roosevelt to turn against Senator Cutting and send speakers direct from the White House to New Mexico to defeat him remains a mystery. I asked Mr. Cutting the last time I saw him if he knew; he said he did not. It must, however, have been something that cut the President to the quick, for he does not often display personal resentments. It is interesting, too, that the President, so far as I have seen, has sent no message of condolence to any relative of the Senator. Perhaps he felt it would be improper or hypocritical under the circumstances. Yet when one recalls how many failures the President has dismissed to civil life with glowing words of eulogy, it seems as if some expression of regret, despite differences of opinion, might have been voiced at the White House. Plainly the wound was too deep. So the Senator died with his title to his seat besmirched and it must remain clouded, especially as the Governor of New Mexico is to appoint Mr. Chavez to the vacancy in the Senate. The pity of it is that there are many in New Mexico who honestly believe that Mr. Cutting's election was procured by improper methods; some feel that it was with the Senator's knowledge and connivance, some think that he was not cognizant of what went on. New Mexico politics are not of the best and the presence of many naturalized Mexicans makes bribery almost universal.

In the absence of any official establishing of the facts, let us take the favorable view of Mr. Cutting. His nearest friends and Senatorial colleagues believed absolutely in his rectitude and integrity. There was certainly no financial motive involved, for Mr. Cutting was very rich. It was on account of his health that he first went to New Mexico; once there he speedily saw the political opportunity open to him. He was one of those rare men of wealth—rare in the United States but not in England—who feel that good fortunes obliges and that they must justify their privileged position by giving to the public service the best that is in them. *The Nation* has recalled his splendid fight against the censorship of books, but he was always to be had for the battle in behalf of personal liberty. His wealth never biased or influenced him. It did not compel him to join the Chamber of Commerce group, or make him a Union Leaguer, or an upholder of the status quo. He gave what he had to give simply, modestly, efficiently, and with no effort at oratory. It was this, I fancy, which so endeared him to his colleagues.

How can we get men of his type into political life? Please do not misunderstand. I am not of those who would be completely satisfied with our democratic institutions if the Senate and House were filled with "gentlemen," graduates of Harvard, like Mr. Cutting, or of Yale, or Princeton, or the University of Virginia. That would not be democracy, heaven knows; it would be a repulsive form of class government. But men of Mr. Cutting's type we shall always need, men who are imbued with public spirit; who, thanks to inherited wealth and traditions, have a knowledge of world conditions which cannot be acquired by one whose sphere of life has been limited by arduous struggle for food and clothes, for education, for opportunity to serve the public. I am even willing to take the chance of having two other types of Harvard men, men like Senator Penrose and Henry Cabot Lodge, again represented in the Senate. For it is a cross-section that the Senate ought to be. Years ago it was truthfully called "the rich man's club." Today those of great wealth are fortunately in a small minority, and when they are of as worthy a type as James Couzens of Michigan, to say nothing of the lost Bronson Cutting, their presence adds to the value of the Senate as a debating and legislative organization.

I must say here, as I have said before, that one of the best achievements of the New Deal has been the bringing into public life of an extremely fine group of men and women of an entirely different type from the familiar spoilsmen, politicians, and boys from the home town who did not make good. Of course Farley has put a lot of spoilsmen into office in the well-known political manner, with the full knowledge, consent, and approval of Franklin Roosevelt. But when I think of the many fine men and women who have entered the public service I feel as if I could not express my thanks often enough. The much-criticized college professor is a vast improvement over the type of man that was specially selected for preferment by Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover. I hope that many of the Roosevelt appointees will continue in public life. There is beyond doubt a dearth of executive ability and force in the top rank in Washington today, but in the second and third grades there is splendid material. Who knows how many of them may have been inspired by Bronson Cutting and the other members of the progressive group in the Senate to offer themselves for government service?

Oswald Garrison Villard

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How Honest Is Life Insurance?

By MORT and E. A. GILBERT

WHEN a life-insurance company sells you expensive insurance, its most vital concern is that you keep it and continue to pay for it. The companies are greatly perturbed by the fact that thousands of policy-holders have successfully cut their insurance costs and that thousands more contemplate doing so. The method followed in most cases, the only practical method, has been to rewrite, that is, to buy new protection at a lower cost and cancel the old expensive insurance. This rewriting is known in insurance circles as "twisting."

What effect does rewriting have on the companies? As policy-holders drop old policies they automatically cancel all policy loans—on which they have been paying a 6 per cent annual interest charge; at the same time they automatically retrieve the cash still in the policies. When the cash is retrieved, it cannot be confiscated by the company at the death of the insured. For regardless of the amount of cash value, or "reserve," in a policy, only the face amount is paid to the beneficiary at death. Again, the retrieved cash ceases to earn interest for the company; any interest now earned goes to the policy-holder. And to add to the company's chagrin, most of the rewritten business is in lower-premium contracts. Rewriting tends to deprive the companies of the chance to confiscate principal and interest.

So the companies have begun a war on "twisting and rewriting." They are determined to block the movement to retrieve cash and decrease costs. They have declared war against their policy-holders. The first shots were fired long ago, when the companies began to flood the mailboxes of their policy-holders with misleading propaganda. The following stereotyped statement appeared wherever the policy-holder would be likely to look:

> IMPORTANT NOTICE
>
> This policy cannot be replaced by a policy in another company without loss to you. Beware, therefore, of any agent who suggests that you discontinue this policy; such an agent is not looking after your interest. He is thinking only of a commission he will receive on the policy he sells you.

Nearly all policy envelopes bear that notice. If it fails to convince you, the company mails along with your premium notice a circular entitled "A Policy Twister's Gain Will Be Your Loss."

Not depending upon mere propaganda, the companies set ingenious traps. Once they get wind of your intention to "twist," a substitution is almost impossible. They can reject your application on physical, moral, or financial grounds. A question included in all applications for insurance reads: "Is the policy for which you are hereby applying intended to take the place of insurance carried with this or with any other company? If yes, give particulars." If you answer yes, the company frequently finds cause to reject you. And when one company rejects you, the information is promptly broadcast to the other companies. In the following fact lurks another restriction upon the policy-holder: all companies require evidence of insurability, frequently at the expense of the insured. Changes to higher-premium contracts as of original date may be made without examination. No more eloquent evidence could be presented to show where the interests of the policy-holder lie.

The chief fomenter of twists, of course, is the agent. The companies, therefore, drum into his ears holy commandments like the following, which appeared in the 1932 rate book of the Equitable Life Assurance Society of New York but are absent in the one for 1935:

> POINTS FOR THE AGENTS
>
> Never speak disparagingly of any policy issued by any responsible company.
>
> Never advise a man to give up a policy in another good company to take one in your company.
>
> Agents who "twist" policies should be driven out of business by their fellows.

Thousands of agents, incapable of seeing the hypocrisy in these "points," have swallowed them hook, line, and sinker. If you ask the average agent about twisting, he will reply without hesitation that it is impossible. And yet in the face of this united front of companies and agents to prevent you from getting help, twisting has continued and increased. A few agents defied the commands of their companies and went ahead to aid the policy-holder. How did the companies deal with them? They resorted to the most despicable practice that can be employed by our vested interests. They influenced legislatures in many states to pass laws making it a criminal offense for an agent to advise you to change your policy.

These "anti-twisting" laws cannot be enforced. In the few cases in which twisters have been haled into court on charges of "misrepresentation," the company has been forced to drop the case before the accused proved the company guilty of the identical charge. A story in the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* shows how an early anti-twisting case ended:

> ANTI-TWISTING RULE UPSET IN INSURANCE SUIT
>
> Special to *Post-Dispatch*, Jefferson City, Missouri.—Circuit Judge W. S. Stillwell of Cole County has issued a "permanent" mandamus directing the State Insurance Department to license Ray P. Prewitt of St. Louis, Missouri, who was denied a license to write life insurance on the ground that he had violated a rule on "twisting." The Insurance Department admitted that Mr. Prewitt spoke the truth in his dealing with policy-holders. Judge Stillwell said: "Violated a ruling?—It was nothing more than a frame-up on the public."

Judge Stillwell's opinion is not an isolated instance. The same attitude has been expressed, more or less openly, by honest actuaries everywhere. Joseph B. Maclean, assistant actuary of the Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, wrote in the *Eastern Underwriter* on October 7, 1927:

> A change of an established policy as from original date to a cheaper plan, thus releasing the difference in cash values, is not in itself twisting, but on the contrary may be a very proper and desirable transaction.

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By harping on the anti-twisting laws, the companies forced most of their agents into submission, although a few refused to be intimidated and went right on twisting or rewriting. When the courts failed them, the companies resorted to other tactics. They said in effect: "Never mind the courts. We will pass our own private laws, and we will be our own judge and jury." And so they struck at rewriting in the most effective way possible. The Metropolitan, for example, formulated a "No Credit—No Commission" ruling. This provides that if, after an agent sells a man insurance, the insured within six months surrenders any amount of insurance he had in force, in any company, prior to the purchase of new insurance, the agent will receive no commissions for the equivalent of the amount dropped. (The Prudential outdoes the Metropolitan; its 1935 ruling specifies no time limit at all: ". . . if the issuance of the policy specified above replaces, or directly or indirectly causes the cancelation of, a policy or policies previously issued by this or any other company, the company [the Prudential] reserves the right to adjust the payment of commissions as the circumstances of the case seem to warrant or to pay no commissions, as the company may decide.")

More contemptible rulings have never been contrived. The companies strike at the policy-holder by making it profitless for any agent to give him honest service. As a matter of fact, these rulings are even more vicious than they sound. They permit the companies to steal the commissions of agents who have no intention of rewriting. If an agent sells you insurance, necessity now forces him to encourage you to keep your old insurance—and your excessive costs—until he can get, beyond contestability, the commissions on the new policy. Therefore the agent is not only prevented from giving you honest advice, advice that will promote your best interests, but is prompted in self-defense to give you deliberately dishonest advice.

We will cite an actual instance showing how the "No Credit—No Commission" rule works in practice, and how it makes the agent the slave of his company. As you read the letter below, take especial note of the iron-handed fashion in which the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company applies the ruling. It admits that the agent had no intention to make a rewrite, and yet it confiscates his commission. We believe that the agent could collect this commission, lawfully due him, through legal proceedings in court. We know of a case where an agent, threatening to contest the "No Credit—No Commission" rule, received not only his lawful commission but an apology stating that an "error" had occurred. The reference to the insured relates to letters which he wrote to the company completely exonerating the agent of any suggestion of a replacement. All names are blanked to protect the agent.

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
FREDERICK H. ECKER, President
New York City

IN RE: [the insured], Pol. No. ——
Mr. ——, Manager, ——
DEAR SIR:

Your letter of ——, addressed to Mr. ——, manager of the Renewal Division, has been referred to us for attention. We are really very sorry to learn that you have again written Mr. —— [the insured] regarding the circumstances under which our business was obtained, for this is the second letter you have sent us and in which you ask Mr. —— [the insured] to write you. You really should not have bothered this man any more about it, because, as we told you in our letter of ——, even though we were applying the "no credit, no commission" rule, and to which no exceptions are made, we did not infer that your agent had acted unethical [*sic*]. You seem to stress the point that your agent knew nothing of Mr. ——'s intentions to discontinue insurance in other companies, and we are not inferring that he did, but the fact remains that insurance in other companies did lapse, and since it followed so shortly after the writing and issuing of our business, no credit and no commission will be allowed.

——, *1934*

[Signed] JOHN R. HARRIS
Manager, Ordinary Application Division

Now let us consider the case of an agent who, despite the stratagems of his company, was still determined to sell insurance from the point of view of the client. The amount of business handled by this agent indicates the tremendous demand for such service. The agent wrote more than half a million dollars of insurance during 1932 and 1933. In these years the officials of the Prudential Insurance Company were either unaware of the circumstances under which the business was written, or rewritten, or willing to ignore them, since it was business twisted from other companies. The following is a letter of commendation written to the agent:

DEAR MR. ——:

It affords me a great deal of pleasure to write you now that the year has closed to congratulate you on having reached a high place in yearly net issue amongst all our special agents and brokers. The splendid work you have done is very much appreciated by us all. I hope that we may continue to be favored in the future with your business, and I can assure you that we at the home office stand ready to aid and assist you in any way we can. With occasional glimpses of the sun through the dark clouds overhead, we have high expectations for an improved 1933, and we confidently look to you to continue among the leaders. With kind regards,

[Signed] SAYRE MACLEOD, Jr., Supervisor

February 20, 1933

Again, early in 1934, we find George H. Chace, assistant secretary of the Prudential, writing: "We are indeed pleased to congratulate you on having qualified for the inclosed Gold Merit Emblem showing $200,000, your net issue for 1933 having just passed that figure. With it we extend the best of good wishes for continuing success." But this could not go on. Observers believe that pressure from the other companies was exerted on the Prudential to drive this agent from the field. It became extremely difficult for him to place business, and for a few months he made no attempt to write insurance, hoping that the pressure would be lifted. When he made an attempt to resume work, however, he discovered he had been released. He wrote to the home office of the Prudential asking why he was no longer in good standing. This was the letter he received in answer:

DEAR MR. ——:

Replying to your letter dated August 18, I wish to inform you that it is not our practice to continue to keep accounts open indefinitely without a reasonable amount of

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new business production. According to our records, you have had no business issued to your credit for the current year. [Signed] W. D. LEMON,
August 21, 1934 Assistant Supervisor

The shabbiness of the pretext is obvious. There are agents in the service of the Prudential who have not written any business over a much longer period. The agent, depending upon insurance writing for his livelihood, wrote again, telling the company he had a large number of clients ready to sign applications. It seemed unlikely that the Prudential would continue to use the "non-production" pretext in the face of a large amount of assured business. They did not; they didn't bother to use any pretext:

DEAR MR. ——:
Answering your letter dated September 28, we regret to inform you that we are not in position to avail ourselves of the opportunity of reopening your account. Trusting, however, that you will be able to make other contacts,
October 3, 1934 [Signed] W. D. LEMON,
Assistant Supervisor

How impossible it is to "make other contacts" is appreciated by those familiar with the interlocking character of the companies.

The company, in this obvious case of twisting, did not dare to admit its real reason for dropping the agent. If it did, the case could be brought to court and truths unpleasant to the companies would be disclosed. Above all, the companies fear such disclosures. Incomes have suffered a drastic reduction; the insurance burden continues to grow. The American policy-holder has been forced to borrow on his cash values to the tune of $4,000,000,000. Having thus decreased his insurance-protection by that amount, paying an annual interest toll of a quarter of a billion, the overcharged and bewildered policy-holder is looking for a way out. His only immediate solution is to rewrite. The entire strategy of the life-insurance companies is designed to prevent that solution. So far, in their war against policy-holders, the companies appear to be winning. With policy-holders unorganized and offering no resistance, it has been an easy victory. It is time for a counter-offensive.

Dirge for Mr. Hopkins

By PAUL W. WARD

SUCH are the ways of Washington that it is only a matter of time when a "going out of business" sign will be hung on the shop of Harry L. Hopkins, Tailor to the Existing Order. But it is Hopkins, not the shop, that will be going out of business. His days as a New Deal hero are numbered. They have been numbered ever since Roosevelt formally elevated the FERA chieftain to the post of No. 1 man in the four-billion-dollar works-relief program and thereby placed him in the grand and fatal succession of Moley, Johnson, Tugwell, and Richberg.

No man can long survive such eminence in the nation's capital. If it does not infect him with megalomania and unfit him for anything less than a metaphysician's role, it at least makes him, under the New Deal, a target for all the slings and arrows of outraged fortunes. It is not, however, the missiles hurled by embattled wealth that will ultimately couch the New Deal's swiftest spender. Far more primitive weapons will lay Hopkins low, and they will be wielded not by the enemy outside the New Deal's gates but by its friends and in its inner sanctum. In short, Hopkins will be brought to earth by his fellows, wielding dirks tipped with the poison of jealousy.

There has always been heated competition for a President's favor but never before has it been so hot as under the New Deal. For this there is a very simple explanation. Never before have the devices of modern publicity been woven so intimately into the federal government's structure. Each croupier of the New Deal has his press agent. Several have a battery of them, and they consider spewing out formal statements, announcements, and speeches but a minor part of their work. Each is a king-maker at heart and lies awake nights thinking up ways and means of making his master preeminent. To promote that ideal the press agent resorts not to the mimeograph but to the whispered confidence, planting here and there in the capital's press corps sly tales illustrative of his master's moral and intellectual superiority over all other New Dealers, including, quite frequently, the President himself. Meanwhile the master, sharing the servant's faith in his own superiority, is busy striving to impart that same faith to the President with varying degrees of tact and persuasiveness. The result is that the Roosevelt Administration, full though it is of high-minded searchers for the More Abundant Life, is rent with internecine strife. Only when one member succeeds in pushing himself out in front of all others is there a momentary semblance of unity, and it is the unity of fratricides—the pack converging to bring down the leader.

Hopkins will not be an easy victim. In the first place, he is a man after Roosevelt's own heart—gay, erratic, and full of those amiable prejudices that are the New Deal substitute for profound social and political convictions. In the second place, he has in Eleanor Roosevelt a powerful friend at court; she is largely responsible for his and the FERA's original appearance in the New Deal picture and we have it on the word of a member of the royal family that "so long as Franklin is married to Eleanor, Franklin will be wed to Hopkins." Neither of these ties, however, will avail Hopkins in the long run. As "progress administrator" of the four-billion-dollar works-relief plan he is saddled with responsibility for a program foredoomed to failure, and his rivals within the Administration will make certain that he pays the cost. The question then arises: When he is relegated to the New Deal discard, how much will he be missed? And the answer comes: Less than he would have been had the discarding come when the New Deal was in its infancy.

In those days Hopkins burned to make America over and he thought Roosevelt had the same fever. His best work was done while he was still solidly under that impression. Much of it since has been undone, and the flame

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that was in Hopkins now smolders under wet blankets from the White House. "Hi," as Hopkins's intimates call him, should have been prepared for all that. He had known Roosevelt for five pre-New Deal years. They met in 1928 when both were striving to further the Presidential ambitions of Al Smith. Hopkins at that time was director of the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association and for many years had been what Washington has spoiled him for ever being again—a social worker.

After being graduated from Grinnell College with a Phi Beta Kappa key dangling from his watch chain, he headed for a newspaper career but was diverted into social work in the East and early thrown into contact with Frances Perkins, Lillian Wald, and other leaders in that field in New York. He became a supervisor for the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and then, from 1918 to 1922, was executive secretary of New York's Board of Child Welfare, a post he relinquished to become for the next two years division manager at New Orleans for the American Red Cross. From New Orleans he went back to New York to take, first, the post of assistant director of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor and then the post in which he was employed when he met Roosevelt.

It is questionable whether Hopkins, the son of a Sioux City, Iowa, harnessmaker, ever was completely at ease in the role of a social worker. He appears to regard it as rather too ladylike for a man. He likes to have it understood, though he is far too astute to advertise it himself, that he is a two-fisted poker player and as a college athlete had a reputation for roughness. It is a manifestation of the Nimrod complex, of which President Roosevelt also is a victim.

Whether Hopkins was ever a particularly good social worker is another question. He was not a nationally known figure in that profession, and his appointment to the FERA chieftainship puzzled many of its members, who otherwise were delighted with the recognition thus given to their clan. He had been enjoying Roosevelt's favor for two years when that came about. In 1931 Roosevelt, then Governor of New York, had set up that state's Temporary Emergency Relief Administration and made Hopkins its executive director. In 1932 Hopkins became its chairman at a salary of $12,500. It was therefore at a considerable financial sacrifice that he accepted Roosevelt's call to the FERA chieftainship in May, 1933, for the federal post then paid only $8,500; it now pays $10,000.

While Roosevelt still was Governor of New York, Hopkins had inoculated him with the idea of the state's responsibility for relief of the unemployed, and the inoculation lasted well into the second year of his Presidency, when its effect began to fade rapidly despite Hopkins's desperate attempts at reinoculation. Today the only real difference between Roosevelt and his predecessor on the relief question is that Hoover, being opposed to federal relief for the unemployed, managed to keep out of it, whereas Roosevelt, having got into it in what latterly must seem an aberrant moment, now finds himself unable to get out and strives to make a virtue of necessity. His true frame of mind shows through his assertion that the federal government "must and shall quit this business of relief." Although the phrase is uttered in much the same tone as Hopkins's frequent "I don't like this business of relief," it has a far different underlying significance, for in Hopkins's case it bespeaks distress over the gross inadequacy of relief at best, whereas in Roosevelt's case it is a manifestation of the panic that rises in him each time the American Bankers' Association and the United States Chamber of Commerce renew their clamor for a cessation of government spending.

Roosevelt is at bottom a budget balancer. As late as March, 1933, he asserted that a balanced budget provided the only sound and practical way of reviving business, and in October, 1932, he had expressed horror at the thought of borrowing to meet the federal deficit. Hoover's resort to that practice, he maintained, had intensified the depression. Earlier still—in 1931—he had vowed that it was dangerous, that it was banking on "fool's luck" to add to the public debt, "for we don't know what the future holds for us." I cite these things in some detail to sharpen my point that Roosevelt is subject only to periodic infatuations with the spending theory of government. That fact explains, in turn, a great many of the New Deal's false starts and contradictions and especially those of the FERA. It explains, for example, the brief career of that amazing enterprise, the Civil Works Administration.

The CWA was Hopkins's own idea, conceived on the fringe of the New Deal's first winter. You will recall that it involved putting to work on projects created by the government 4,000,000 persons—half from the relief rolls and half from the ranks of the still self-sustaining unemployed—and that these persons were to be engaged not at work-relief's hybrid tasks but at bona fide jobs. You will recall, too, that the scheme involved no caustic attempt to say that some work is work and that other work is not work. Under the CWA, workers were to be workers doing a thirty-hour weekly stint and paid therefor the same wages as men in private employment, regardless of the fact that, as a result, they might stuff their larders with one loaf of bread too many.

It is characteristic of Hopkins that he wasted no time meditating upon the stupendous problems and conflicts such a revolutionary scheme might engender. He talked it over with his aides—Jacob Baker, Aubrey Williams, and Corrington Gill—and from their brief discussions there emerged an equally brief memorandum outlining the scheme. With this memorandum in hand he trotted off to the White House one Wednesday afternoon in November. He went merely to enlist Roosevelt's interest. He expected to be told to develop the idea and come back with a fuller outline. He still expected that when he left the White House that evening. But it so happened that he had caught the New Deal Messiah in one of his periods of infatuation with the spending art, and Hopkins literally woke up the next morning to discover that Roosevelt without further ado had proclaimed the CWA in effect.

Most of the ills that subsequently beset the CWA are traceable to that bit of Presidential impetuosity. "Full speed ahead," the White House ordered, and Helmsman Hopkins, though lacking compass and charts, strove to obey. It is a tribute to his administrative skill—and particularly to the sublime butchery with which he operates upon the thwarting tentacles of bureaucratic red tape—that, brief though the CWA's life was, it stands out as the most successful of New Deal endeavors. It progressed to the accompaniment of

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screams from the right, and one of the loudest screamers was General Hugh S. Johnson, then Lord High Everything Else of the New Deal. It seemed the CWA had committed the cardinal sin of paying wages higher than those sacred minima written into the Johnsonian code and was blocking the wheels of the only true and beautiful industrial progress —private industrial progress. Johnson's screams reached the White House and he trailed them there. So did Hopkins. Growling that "some people just can't stand seeing others make a decent living," the CWA's progenitor grappled with and promptly floored the Blue Eagle's champion.

But the din of battle outside his door had frightened Mr. Roosevelt. Furthermore, though Hopkins's verbal strangle-hold had throttled Johnson's bellowings, it could not choke off the bellowings of chambers of commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the wheat ranchers, and the cotton planters. Nor could it stop the keening of the banking fraternity as they watched the bill for the CWA mount and mount until it reached nearly $950,000,000. More difficult to combat, however, than all the bellowing and all the keening was the whispering. Because the CWA had been launched with such incautious speed, neither its personnel nor its projects could be chosen with proper care and the whole structure soon was riddled with charges of graft and nepotism. In the final analysis, few of those charges stood up, but they sufficed in the interim to put the needed moral overtones in the anvil chorus of reaction. How Hopkins helped with the orchestration of that chorus comes later in the story. What concerns us at this point is the fact that it was not the classic scandals of the CWA that caused Roosevelt to cut short its life.

His heart went out not to the moralists but to the wage- and penny-pinchers, to all those who, as Hopkins has put it, "apparently think the primary object of relief is to save the government money." The first symptom of that Presidential heartburn was a reduction in working hours on CWA projects—wage-cutting in a polite form. Later—in January, 1934—the death blow was struck. The forces of reaction had triumphed once more in the White House and they had triumphed just when the CWA was beginning to hit a smooth stride with what seemed to be a clear field ahead. Characteristically, Roosevelt did not order Hopkins to end the CWA. He asked him if he *could* end it. It was a rhetorical question, of course, and the meaning was perfectly clear to Hopkins, who was stunned by the suddenness of it.

He set about the wrecking process in one of his fine hysterias, and that hysteria did not end until one day late in January when he discovered that in his frenzy he had filled the nation's press with a sweeping repudiation of the whole CWA idea. What had happened was that at a press conference the previous day Hopkins, maddened by a sort of grief over the CWA's impending burial, had inveighed bitterly and at length against the chiseling business men and politicians, whom he blamed for the CWA's untimely death. It was a show such as Washington never had seen before, a "father disowns his child" performance, and the proceedings were broadcast far and wide the next day. Unwittingly, Hopkins had seemed to confirm all the charges of graft and corruption whispered about the CWA.

Learned pieces were written at the time about the political cunning or lack thereof that provoked Hopkins's outburst, but the real reason is to be found in his tremendous will-to-believe-in-Roosevelt. That will, which has survived many tests, is, in turn, the product of three factors. One is Hopkins's deep loyalty to the President, a loyalty born in no small part of gratitude to him for giving a humble social worker so large a place in the national sun. The second factor is Hopkins's eagerness to keep that place in the sun; he has told friends that after two years in Washington he could never adjust himself to being a social worker again. The final factor is Hopkins's sophomoric delight in the chess-play of politics; he regards Roosevelt as a heaven-sent master of that art and accordingly stands somewhat in awe of him. Slight though that awe may be at times, it usually suffices to make Hopkins surrender principle to the greater good of political expediency as argued by his White House hero.

It was in response to just such an argument by Roosevelt that Hopkins in November, 1934, lowered another one of his banners—the thirty-cents-an-hour minimum rate for work-relief labor. It was not a spoken argument in this case, for Roosevelt did not even bother to explain why he wanted the minimum abolished. The reason, however, shows itself in what followed. A survey made by the FERA showed that the effects of the abandonment were almost wholly confined to the South and that there the minima promptly dropped to 15, 12½, and 10 cents an hour. Will the reason be any clearer if I add that Southern Congressmen are the chairmen of the House's most powerful committees, and that in the Senate the president, majority leader, and whips are Southerners? All Hopkins's other surrenders could be traced to similar causes, including his acceptance of the less-than-a-wage-more-than-a-dole provision in the President's four-billion-dollar works-relief bill. That was Roosevelt's own idea in so far as its appearance in the works-relief bill is concerned. Before that the idea belonged to the White Sulphur Springs conference of industrialists and financiers and they imbedded it in their program. It was one of the provisions of that program that caused Hopkins to rush, jeering, to the White House. It also was one of the provisions at which the White House affected to do a little jeering on its own account. Naturally, then, Hopkins was surprised to find it later written into the bill. That leaves him the job of affecting to see no reason why things should be otherwise.

It is a hard task for one whose published utterances yield the following:

> Wherever local existing wage levels have been disturbed by work-relief wages so that, as is occasionally alleged, workers refuse private employment because they can make more from relief, the true state of affairs is apt to be that the local wage level is no level at all but a subcellar. . . . It is easy for well-fed people to sit around a table and say the cheapest way is the best way. . . . Give the poor $1,000,000, it is said, and they will still want beans, pork, and molasses. It is the well-fed who say it —the old and popular fiction that poor people don't really mind being poor. . . . I have said, and I say again, that while relief has met the emergency needs of the unemployed, it is not an effective and satisfactory method of meeting this problem over a long period of time.

[*The sixth article in Mr. Ward's series on "F. D. R.—the Boss in the Back Room," a study of the Department of the Interior and Mr. Ickes, will be published in the issue of June 5.*]

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Dust Changes America

By MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE

VITAMIN K they call it—the dust which sifts under the door sills, and stings in the eyes, and seasons every spoonful of food. The dust storms have distinct personalities, rising in formation like rolling clouds, creeping up silently like formless fog, approaching violently like a tornado. Where has it come from? It provides topics of endless speculation. Red, it is the topsoil from Oklahoma; brown, it is the fertile earth of western Kansas; the good grazing land of Texas and New Mexico sweeps by as a murky yellow haze. Or, tracing it locally, "My uncle will be along pretty soon," they say; "I just saw his farm go by."

The town dwellers stack their linen in trunks, stuff wet cloths along the window sills, estimate the tons of sand in the darkened air above them, paste cloth masks on their faces with adhesive tape, and try to joke about Vitamin K. But on the farms and ranches there is an attitude of despair.

By coincidence I was in the same parts of the country where last year I photographed the drought. As short a time as eight months ago there was an attitude of false optimism. "Things will get better," the farmers would say. "We're not as hard hit as other states. The government will help out. This can't go on." But this year there is an atmosphere of utter hopelessness. Nothing to do. No use digging out your chicken coops and pigpens after the last "duster" because the next one will be coming along soon. No use trying to keep the house clean. No use fighting off that foreclosure any longer. No use even hoping to give your cattle anything to chew on when their food crops have literally blown out of the ground.

It was my job to avoid dust storms, since I was commissioned by an airplane company to take photographs of its course from the air, but frequently the dust storms caught up with us, and as we were grounded anyway, I started to photograph them. Thus I saw five dust-storm states from the air and from the ground.

In the last several years there have been droughts and sand storms and dusters, but they have been localized, and always one state could borrow from another. But this year the scourge assumes tremendous proportions. Dust storms are bringing distress and death to 300,000 square miles; they are blowing over all of Kansas, all of Nebraska and Wyoming, strips of the Dakotas, about half of Colorado, sections of Iowa and Missouri, the greater part of Oklahoma, and the northern panhandle of Texas, extending into the eastern parts of New Mexico.

Last year I saw farmers harvesting the Russian thistle. Never before had they thought of feeding thistles to cattle. But this prickly fodder became precious for food. This year even the Russian thistles are dying out and the still humbler soap weed becomes as vital to the farmer as the fields of golden grain he tended in the past. Last year's thistle-fed cattle dwindled to skin and bone. This year's herds on their diet of soap weed develop roughened hides, ugly growths around the mouth, and lusterless eyes.

Years of the farmers' and ranchers' lives have gone into the building up of their herds. Their herds were like their families to them. When AAA officials spotted cows and steers for shooting during the cattle-killing days of last summer, the farmers felt as though their own children were facing the bullets. Kansas, a Republican state, has no love for the AAA. This year winds whistled over land made barren by the drought and the crop-conservation program. When Wallace removed the ban on the planting of spring wheat he was greeted by cheers. But the wheat has been blown completely out of the ground. Nothing is left but soap weed, or the expensive cotton-seed cake, and after that —bankruptcy.

The storm comes up in a terrifying way. Yellow clouds roll. The wind blows such a gale that it is all my helper can do to hold my camera to the ground. The sand whips into my lens. I repeatedly wipe it away trying to snatch an exposure before it becomes completely coated again. The light becomes yellower, the wind colder. Soon there is no photographic light, and we hurry for shelter to the nearest farmhouse.

Three men and a woman are seated around a dust-caked lamp, on their faces grotesque masks of wet cloth. The children have been put to bed with towels tucked over their heads. My host greets us: "It takes grit to live in this country." They are telling stories: A bachelor harnessed the sandblast which ripped through the keyhole by holding his pots and pans in it until they were spick and span. A pilot flying over Amarillo got caught in a sand storm. His motor clogged; he took to his parachute. It took him six hours to shovel his way back to earth. And when a man from the next county was struck by a drop of water, he fainted, and it took two buckets of sand to revive him.

The migrations of the farmer have begun. In many of the worst-hit counties 80 per cent of the families are on relief. In the open farm country one crop failure follows another. After perhaps three successive crop failures the farmer can't stand it any longer. He moves in with relatives and hopes for a job in Arizona or Illinois or some neighboring state where he knows he is not needed. Perhaps he gets a job as a cotton picker, and off he goes with his family, to be turned adrift again after a brief working period.

We passed them on the road, all their household goods piled on wagons, one lucky family on a truck. Lucky, because they had been able to keep their truck when the mortgage was foreclosed. All they owned in the world was packed on it; the children sat on a pile of bureaus topped with mattresses, and the sides of the truck were strapped up with bed springs. The entire family looked like a Ku Klux Klan meeting, their faces done up in masks to protect them from the whirling sand.

Near Hays, Kansas, a little boy started home from school and never arrived there. The neighbors looked for him till ten at night, and all next day a band of two hundred

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people searched. At twilight they found him, only a quarter of a mile from home, his body nearly covered with silt. He had strangled to death. The man who got lost in his own ten-acre truck garden and wandered around choking and stifling for eight hours before he found his house considered himself lucky to escape with his life. The police and sheriffs are kept constantly busy with calls from anxious parents whose children are lost, and the toll is mounting of people who become marooned and die in the storms.

But the real tragedy is the plight of the cattle. In a rising sand storm cattle quickly become blinded. They run around in circles until they fall and breathe so much dust that they die. Autopsies show their lungs caked with dust and mud. Farmers dread the birth of calves during a storm. The newborn animals will die within twenty-four hours.

And this same dust that coats the lungs and threatens death to cattle and men alike, that ruins the stock of the storekeeper lying unsold on his shelves, that creeps into the gear shifts of automobiles, that sifts through the refrigerator into the butter, that makes housekeeping, and gradually life itself, unbearable, this swirling drifting dust is changing the agricultural map of the United States. It piles ever higher on the floors and beds of a steadily increasing number of deserted farmhouses. A half-buried plowshare, a wheat binder ruffled over with sand, the skeleton of a horse near a dirt-filled water hole are stark evidence of the meager life, the wasted savings, the years of toil that the farmer is leaving behind him.

Gag Legislation in Michigan

By A. B. MAGIL

A DARK horse has emerged in the neck-and-neck race toward fascism, challenging such thoroughbred states as California, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Alabama. The state of Michigan, riding its Dunckel bill, is galloping madly into the lead.

The Dunckel bill (Senate Bill 292), sponsored by Senators Dunckel and Baldwin and blessed by William Randolph Hearst, was born without advance fanfare. It was dropped rather quietly into the Senate chamber on March 21. Shortly after, it became known that the bill had the backing of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the American Legion, and similar groups. On April 24 it was passed by the Michigan Senate by a vote of 21 to 11. It is now before the House.

The Dunckel bill is perhaps the most drastic of the crop of anti-labor gag bills that have come up in various states in the past few months. Under its terms a person is guilty of a felony punishable by from one to fourteen years' imprisonment or a $5,000 fine or both, who does any of the following: advocates overthrow of the government; publishes, distributes, or sells literature advocating overthrow of the government; organizes or aids in the organization of any group having this as one of its objects; attends a meeting at which such ideas are propagated; allows a room, building, or other property owned or controlled by him to be used for such a meeting; teaches such doctrine in a private or public school; or "has in his possession or transports from any point within this state, with the intent in any way or manner whatsoever to encourage, foster, further, aid, or abet any attempt to overthrow the government, any books, pamphlets, documents, or papers of any kind, wherein or whereon appear any words, signs, or symbols advocating or suggesting" such overthrow.

"Overthrow of government" is defined as "any attempt to destroy the existing form of government by force, violence, or any unlawful means."

Messrs. Dunckel and Baldwin have entitled their ambitious project: "A bill to promote respect for the constitution, laws, and institutions of this state and the United States." This sinister threat to destroy every vestige of civil liberties and strait-jacket the labor movement has been met by the organization of a broad united front of labor and liberal organizations that have temporarily sunk their differences to fight this common battle. Initiated by the Detroit branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Conference for the Protection of Civil Rights includes such organizations as the Detroit and Wayne County Federation of Labor (A. F. of L.), the Mechanics' Educational Society of America, an independent union of tool and diemakers, the Methodist Episcopal Church of Detroit, the American League Against War and Fascism, and the Socialist, Proletarian, and Communist parties. The conference is headed by the Reverend J. H. Bollens, pastor of the Messiah Evangelical Church, who is chairman of the Detroit branch of the A. C. L. U.

Two rounds have thus far been fought in the battle against reaction. The first was the attempt to secure a promised public hearing on the bill in the Senate. This round was lost, and the Senate pushed the bill through without a hearing. The second round was fought at the public hearing before the House Judiciary Committee at Lansing on the evening of May 2. It was one of the most remarkable scenes that any American legislative hall has witnessed.

A delegation of more than 400 opponents of the bill, representing, according to Mr. Bollens, some 450,000 people, locked horns for four hours with professional red-baiters and patrioteers. Mr. Hearst's Detroit *Times* had announced that a caravan of 300 Detroit legionnaires would be joined by 2,000 others from outstate in support of the bill. Nobody knows what happened to all this formidable patriotism, but the fact is that only about fifty of the legionnaires showed up.

Spokesmen for the bill included ex-Governor Wilber M. Brucker; Carl Smith, member of the American Legion National Committee on Law and Order; Lester O. Moody, Michigan Commander of the Legion; John Kruze, White Guard Russian World War aviator; Father Joseph Luther, S. J., dean of men at the University of Detroit, who spoke in the name of the Detroit Council of Catholic Organizations; Mrs. Agnes Dunn, chairman of the Americanism Committee of the Legion's Michigan Women's Auxiliary; Frank G. Mitzel, vice-president of the Michigan division of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks; and, believe it or not, Harry A. Jung of Chicago, the same Jung who was

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exposed by John L. Spivak in the *New Masses* as the head of the American Vigilant Intelligence Federation, a secret espionage and anti-Semitic organization.

Let no one mistake the intent of the Dunckel bill. Its provisions are so broad that anyone reading *The Nation,* or wearing a button with the emblem of the hammer and sickle or the torch of the Socialist Party, can be charged with advocating the overthrow of the government and be imprisoned. In an effort to placate the trade unions and disrupt the opposition movement, Senators Dunckel and Baldwin amended their bill to the effect that it is not to be construed as limiting the right of peaceful picketing or striking. This joker, however, deceived no one; it merely means that a striker, instead of being charged with picketing, will be accused, whenever the powers that be so please, of advocating the overthrow of the government.

The attitude of the Republican state administration is indicated in the opinion which Attorney General Harry Toy hastened to issue even before the Dunckel bill was voted on in the Senate: he declared it entirely constitutional. In other words, if it passes the House, Governor Fitzgerald intends to sign it. All of which means that the reactionary forces, dominated by the open-shop automobile companies, are not letting the grass grow under their feet in their drive to Hitlerize Michigan.

At the present writing the House Judiciary Committee has not yet acted on the bill. Meanwhile the protest movement is growing. Trade unions throughout the state are adopting resolutions against the bill, the president of the Flint Federation of Labor is touring A. F. of L. locals, urging them to take action, and radicals and liberals of all shades are joining hands to prevent the destruction of the right of free speech, press, and assemblage. This movement needs the support of the rest of the country. Remember, the gag-bill disease is contagious.

The Intelligent Traveler

Outstanding Tours of 1935

By JOHN ROTHSCHILD

THE ideal way to learn to know a foreign country is to visit it alone, with lots of time, knowledge of the language, some understanding of its history and of its present condition, and plenty of personal introductions. Lacking these prerequisites, the lone traveler skims over the surface of things, seeing what travel companies and other tourists tell him are the things to see. It is far better to ride along on the experience and connections of an organized group. Traveling alone is comparable to studying by oneself. The self-educated man who gets his learning by long application and the trial and error method gets something that can be obtained in no other way. But the student whose time is limited must take an organized course.

The criterion in choosing an organized tour is like that for a study course: Is it a good course? Has it content? Is it a big, impersonal affair or is it limited in size so that one gets immediacy of experience? Who conducts this course; what are his qualifications for intellectual leadership? There are few organized tours that pass these tests. The listing which follows is doubtless incomplete. But it indicates types and possibilities.

Odyssey Cruises for the tenth season will show travelers the ports of the eastern Mediterranean and the towns "around the bend" which are unvisited by the large cruise ships. For the Odyssey sails on a supremely comfortable private yacht, the Prince Olav, originally built for the royal family of England. There will be two twenty-five-day cruises this year, one out of Marseille, the other out of Venice. The minimum rate is $595 including shore trips. This is without transatlantic passage. Address Odyssey Cruises, 598 Madison Avenue, New York.

The University of Washington sponsors its third *European Museum Study Course* in historic textiles. The tour is for art students and teachers, home economists, and others interested in textiles and costumes. Credit is given. Grace G. Denny of the university conducts the group for the third time. The rate is $630, third class, for the sixty-two-day round trip. Address Miss Grace G. Denny, Home Economics Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

The annual *English Study Tour* sponsored by the Drama League of America is ideal for those who want to absorb England and study its dramatic arts. The tour this year will be conducted by Julia Farnam, lecturer and director, and Dean Pearle Aiken-Smith of the University of Southern California. The plans include the six weeks' summer session at the Central School of Speech and Drama attached to the University of London, and attendance at the Malvern Festival, Shakespeare Festival, Verse-Speaking Contest, and International Congress of Phonetic Sciences. The rate for the fifty-six-day tour is $597, tourist class eastbound, cabin class westbound, travel in England by motor buses. Address Drama League Travel Bureau, Essex House, New York.

The *Art and Music Courses* of the International School of Art offer students and teachers an unequaled opportunity for observation and work in East European countries. Talented artists of each country act as leaders and instructors. The work is organized by countries and the traveler may make his own itinerary, spending his time in Poland, Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, or Austria, or any combination. Arrangements are distinguished by an informal freedom which will appeal to the creative artist. The rate for the art course, which is typical, is $625 for sixty-two days, including third-class ocean passage. Four countries are visited. Address International School of Art, 127 East Fifty-fifth Street, New York.

There are two well-established tours for colored people conducted by race leaders. The sixth *Hampton Institute Tour* visits England, Scotland, Belgium, Holland, and France, under Professor A. Ogden Porter of the institute. The rate is $470, third class throughout, for the six weeks' round trip. Address Hampton Institute, Extension Division, Hampton, Virginia. *Adolph Hodge,* a New York teacher, will take a party abroad for the seventh time, visiting France, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Greece, Italy, and Switzerland. The New York City Board of Education grants "alertness credits" for the tour. The rate for the sixty-day trip is $650, third class on the ocean, second class abroad. Address Paul Tausig and Son, 29 West Forty-sixth Street, New York.

A *Student Tour to Germany* bent on political and social inquiry is sponsored by American student organizations. There will be the minimum of formal lectures and the maximum of hikes, camping, parties, and sightseeing in company with German students, the idea being that such informal contacts give opportunity for an honest give-and-take of opinions. The rate is $280, third class throughout, for the thirty-three-day round trip, the rate in Germany averaging $4.09 per day. Various extensions to other countries may be arranged. Address the National Student Federation of America, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York.

Guests in Europe is the name which brackets a series of

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trips for college students. The plans are characterized by informality and a wide optional choice of things to do; there is abundant contact with hospitable Europeans. One unique feature is the week spent at a European student vacation center; there are three to choose from, one in Austria, one in Germany, and another in Switzerland—all in the mountains. The groups will go first to England and France, splitting up into parties of ten or fewer as soon as they reach shore. There are half a dozen possibilities after that, depending on what countries the student wants to see. The shortest tour of thirty days costs $395, third class. The longer tours are proportionately much cheaper. Address National Student Federation of America, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York.

Students of the classics will be interested in the cruises and tours planned in celebration of the 2,000th anniversary of the birth of Horace. Eminent Latin and Greek scholars will lead the groups and lecture en route. A cruise on the privately chartered steamship City of London spends twenty-four days in the Mediterranean, touching at many famous ports of the ancient world. The rate, with third-class transatlantic passage, is $545. Those who wish may spend twenty-seven days following Caesar's conquests in Gaul, and visiting the country of Horace, at an additional cost of $340. One may begin with Caesar, continue with the Horatian pilgrimage, and then take the Horatian cruise. Standards are first class on the cruise and combined first and second class on land. Address the Bureau of University Travel, Newton, Massachusetts.

The Psychology of Social Change is the central interest of a group that will spend forty-six days in Europe and Russia under the leadership of Selden Rodman, editor of *Common Sense*. There will be a week at Oetz in the Tyrol, the headquarters of the American People's College in Europe. Nine days in the Soviet Union are concentrated in Moscow and Leningrad. The rate for the round trip of sixty-two days is $566, third class. Address Pocono Study Tours, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Dr. Alfred Adler, the psychologist, will conduct a party for the study of individual psychology. The itinerary is comprehensive, with ten days at the American People's College at Oetz and five days in Vienna. The minimum rate for the sixty-seven-day round trip is $589, third class. Address Pocono Study Tours, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Folk Dance and Physical Education Abroad is the special interest of a group that will visit Europe with Helen Garvin, member of the executive committee of the Folk Festival Council of New York. Folk festivals in several countries, programs of folk dances especially arranged for the group, and stays in folk schools and institutes are features of the trip, which is the fifth of its kind. The rate is $479, third class, for the sixty-one-day round trip. Address Pocono Study Tours, 545 Fifth Avenue, New York.

The Third Palestine Travel Seminar will be conducted by Leo W. Schwarz, author of "Palestine Today." The program is arranged by the General Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine and includes a week in the new agricultural settlements. The minimum rate is $495, third class, for the sixty-four-day round trip. Address the Open Road, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York.

The General Federation of Jewish Labor is host to another Palestine tour which costs $485, third class, for the sixty-two-day round trip. The School of the Jewish Women offers a tour with an archaeological emphasis which costs $575, with tourist passage, for the sixty-one-day round trip. Address Amalgamated Bank, 11 Union Square, New York City.

The Seminar in Mexico, conducted by the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, has become a classic event. Its tenth session will be held this year in Cuernavaca and Mexico City from July 3 to July 23. The program includes many side trips. Discussions on economics, history, art, music, literature, international relations, botany, ethnology, archaeology, and folklore are l d by authoritie from both countries. From New York by steamer the rate is $398.50. From Chicago by rail it is $363. These rates cover the bulk of the expenses in Mexico. There are optional opportunities for additional travel in Mexico at the conclusion of the Seminar. Address the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York.

An *Educational Field Course in Mexico* is being offered by Teachers College, Columbia University, in cooperation with the Department of Education in Mexico. During nine days in Mexico City and ten days in outlying districts, there will be lectures by Mexican authorities and opportunity to attend the joint conference of the New Education Fellowship (International) and the Progressive Education Association (of the United States). Professor Mabel Carney of Teachers College will direct the tour, for which credit is optional. Of several rates quoted, the lowest is $296, first class, excluding meals while in Mexico City. Address the Secretary, International Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

For the eighth season *Upton Close* is introducing a group of Americans to the Orient. They will circle the globe, visiting England, Scandinavia, the Soviet Union, Manchoukuo, Korea, China, and Japan. The eleven weeks' trip from New York back to New York (travel standards vary from country to country) costs $975. Address the Open Road, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York.

Dr. Frank Alanson Lombard, for years on the faculties of Japanese and Chinese universities, will lead a tour through China and Japan. The ten weeks' trip from Seattle back to San Francisco costs $795, with tourist passage on the Pacific. Address the Bureau of University Travel, Newton, Massachusetts.

Additional tours will be reported on in later articles.

The Third Russian Seminar, conducted by the Bureau of University Travel, Newton, Massachusetts, will travel second class in the U. S. S. R., instead of third class as stated in a previous article.

Correspondence

More About Gallup

To the Editors of The Nation:

Further investigation of the kidnapping of David Levinson, International Labor Defense attorney, and Robert Minor, journalist and chairman of the Gallup Defense Committee, by armed and hooded vigilantes at Gallup on the evening of May 2 discloses that the crime was committed on a Navajo Indian Reservation. This means that federal authorities have clear jurisdiction to intervene and to take vigorous steps toward the investigation of the kidnapping and prosecution of the participants in it.

New Mexico organizations interested in the protection of the constitutional rights of the workers charged with murder as the result of the fatal shooting of a sheriff and two workers at Gallup on April 4, in affording such workers a fair trial, and in bringing to justice the perpetrators of the mob violence against those interested in their defense are agreed on this fourfold federal program:

1. An investigation by the Indian Bureau, of which John Collier is the chief.

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2. An investigation and prosecution by the United States Department of Justice, through Homer Cummings, Attorney General, and J. Edgar Hoover, chief of the Department of Justice agents.

3. A Senatorial investigation, with full powers of subpoena, by a Senatorial subcommittee.

4. A Congressional investigation similar to the Senatorial investigation proposed.

May we suggest that the readers of *The Nation* immediately communicate with the federal departments above named to urge them to take prompt action?

Those who desire to contribute to the defense fund being raised to defend the ten miners awaiting trial on first-degree-murder charges may do so by forwarding contributions to the Gallup Defense Committee, Sante Fé, New Mexico.

Santa Fé, N. M., May 6 A. L. Wirin, Counsel,
American Civil Liberties Union
David Levinson, Counsel,
International Labor Defense
Robert Minor, Chairman,
Gallup Defense Committee

Censorship in Cuba

To the Editors of The Nation:

Ambassador Jefferson Caffery, our representative in Cuba and playboy with Colonel Fulgencio Batista, the dictator of that country, who holds some four thousand political prisoners in jail, is one of the chief obstacles to the dissemination in this country of truthful news about political and economic conditions on the island. He has repeatedly attempted to influence the American correspondents to send out wholly favorable reports about the Batista-Mendieta regime. He has set himself up as an unofficial censor of Cuban news. Further than that, pressure has been brought on newspapers and editors by Mr. Sumner Welles of the State Department in the case of news which had no connection with American interests but merely put the Batista regime in a bad light.

Official quarters have admitted that the purpose is to keep the present Cuban government in power, whatever the cost to the Cuban people, at least until after elections in the United States, and to prevent any news going out which would enable the opposition to President Roosevelt, chiefly the Republicans, to criticize the Administration for its policy in Cuba.

The difficulties of sustaining the present puppet regime in Cuba, so intensely unpopular with the Cuban people, are great. One is the financial difficulty. Despite the optimistic reports put out by the American Embassy in Cuba, the government will end up the fiscal year with a deficit of about $16,000,000. A financing scheme is apparently on foot, which will attempt to salvage the Chase Bank loans, cover the deficit, and provide about $4,000,000 extra to be split up as graft. In this connection, Leeds, the tin-plate king, recently visited Cuba in his yacht. On board was the brother of Barney Baruch, friend of Roosevelt. At Varadero they entertained Caffery, Batista, and Steinhart of public-utilities fame over the week-end. When they came to Havana, Batista entertained them lavishly.

It is rumored that the State Department, through the Cuban Reconstruction Bank, which financed the recent silver issues in Cuba, is attempting to get some more money for the present cutthroat gang running the destinies of Cuba in return for recognition of the Chase debt with reduction in interest. It is doubtful whether any institution in this country would dare handle the issue, which would thus consolidate Cuba's debts, for the money would never be paid back. It is rumored that the American government itself will find some way of indirectly putting up the money. This merely means that the American taxpayer will foot the bill for propping up a tyranny of the worst sort in Cuba. More American money gone after bad. More uncollectable debts.

New York, May 2 Carleton Beals

Protest Against the "Gag" Bills!

To the Editors of The Nation:

May we ask those of your readers who have not already done so to send letters of protest to their Representatives and Senators at Washington against the "gag" bills pending in Congress, described in your issue of April 10? These measures received a thumping indorsement from the Chamber of Commerce of the United States at its meeting in Washington last week. The Hearst press is renewing its demands for such legislation.

It is important to note that the bills are dangerous not only in their direct attack on left-wingers but because in operation they would threaten the whole labor movement. Further, these bills punish mere opinions, mere advocacy of certain ideas. Existing federal and state laws are more than adequate to punish conspiracies or acts of violence against the government. The federal proposals most menacing to civil rights are these:

1. Half a dozen sedition bills punishing the written or spoken advocacy of overthrow by force and violence of the government. Of these bills H. R. 4313 is the one most likely to be passed.

2. The establishment of a special political secret service to deal with radicals. As yet this proposal has not been embodied in a bill but it soon will be.

3. The McCormack Military Disobedience Bill H. R. 5845, punishing written or spoken incitement of soldiers and sailors to disobedience.

4. A flock of alien bills broadening the powers of the Department of Labor to deport and exclude aliens. H. R. 6795, the Administration's proposal, is objectionable largely because of its inadequacy. H. R. 7120, allegedly striking at fascists and Communists, might make any alien political dissenter liable to deportation. H. R. 7221 provides for the deportation of aliens engaged in unlawful political activity or spreading propaganda inspired from a foreign source.

Seventeen state legislatures are still in session. Nearly all of them are considering "gag" legislation of some kind. Alabama, California, Illinois, and Michigan are faced with particularly vicious bills. It is important that liberals in these states protest at once to their Representatives against any measures punishing membership in radical organizations or the expression of opinions. At present sweeping sedition bills are pending in Alabama, California, Michigan and Texas. The state measure to bar from the ballot left-wing parties, backed by the American Legion and the Elks, is still pending in California, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts and Michigan. It has already been enacted in Arkansas, Delaware, Indiana, and Tennessee. Legislation requiring loyalty oaths from teachers, already passed in a number of states, is pending in Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin.

We are anxious to enlist the cooperation of all readers of *The Nation* in the fight against these "gag" bills. Will those interested in protesting against these measures send us their names so we may forward to them fuller data?

New York, May 7 Harry F. Ward, Chairman
Arthur Garfield Hays, Counsel
Roger Baldwin, Director

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Schools for Workers Survive

To the Editors of The Nation:

In view of the article on the schools for workers printed in *The Nation* of April 24, your readers may be interested in the plans for this summer's sessions.

The Bryn Mawr Summer School, which has been held on the campus of Bryn Mawr College for the past fourteen years, will this year be held at Mt. Ivy Camp, Pomona, New York, from June 7 to August 2. The plan of instruction and the faculty will be much the same as in preceding years, under the direction of Elizabeth L. Otey, Ph.D.

The Southern Summer School will meet at Wild Acres, Little Switzerland, North Carolina, from June 23 to August 3. Plans for this year include for the first time a group of selected second-year students who desire special training for some particular phase of the labor movement. Louise Leonard McLaren will direct the school.

The Wisconsin School, which is coeducational, will be held as usual as a part of the summer session of the University of Wisconsin, under the direction of Alice Shoemaker, from June 30 to August 9.

The Summer School for Office Workers, held at Oberlin College during the past two years, will this year meet on the campus of Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, from July 6 to August 3. Jean Carter will be director.

We shall be grateful for any publicity you can give to the fact that we actually are having schools this summer.

New York, May 8 Jean Carter, Acting Director,
Affiliated Schools for Workers

Who's Always Wrong?

To the Editors of The Nation:

I have read Mr. See's letter in *The Nation* of April 17, in which he says, "For *The Nation* has the rare distinction of being the only publication in the country that is always wrong on every question." This is pure jealousy on Mr. See's part. For years and years he has had absolutely no competition for the distinction of being wrong on every question.

New York, April 16 Hugh R. Partridge

P. S. What has become of the letters Mr. See used to write to the daily press pointing out the shortcomings of the female of the species? Those little gems of unconscious humor are sorely missed in these parlous times. H. R. P.

Summer Jobs

To the Editors of The Nation:

Industry has played particular havoc with human life in the industrial towns of the South. Children of coal miners and textile workers live in the midst of terrific industrial struggle which they frequently do not understand. Public school education offers no adequate interpretation and only keeps them from following the path that offers some economic hope. An effective labor movement must recognize the need for rearing its children in labor ideology.

Pioneer Youth each summer sends club and camp leaders to help these children to find themselves in the world of labor. Teachers, industrial workers, left-wing social workers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, farmers, scientists, stenographers, and bookkeepers may all find places in the program. They are expected to have some knowledge of Marxian economics.

This summer for the first time small salaries will be offered for some of the best-trained workers. Inquiries should be addressed to Pioneer Youth, 69 Bank Street, New York City.

New York, May 10 Agnes Sailer,
Director of Southern Work

Justice Holmes's Letters

To the Editors of The Nation:

The late Mr. Justice Holmes has intrusted to Professor Felix Frankfurter, of the Harvard Law School, and to me the task of arranging for authoritative publications concerning his life and work, and by his will he appointed me executor and left to me the use and disposal of his letters, papers, and memoranda, including his rights in letters written by him. Professor Frankfurter and I shall be grateful if any who possess letters of his which may fitly be made available for publication would communicate with me or send to me such letters as they are willing to allow us to examine. All such material will be copied and the originals returned. My address is 84 State Street.

Boston, May 4 John G. Palfrey

Henry Demarest Lloyd

To the Editors of The Nation:

May I use your column to state that all letters and other biographical material concerning the late Henry Demarest Lloyd and the causes in which he figured is being permanently housed in the fireproof building of the State Historical Library at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Anyone having such material is urged to send it, charges collect, to the library, where it will be both secure and available for use.

New York, April 24 Caro Lloyd Strobell

F. Hubner & Co.

In the article, Nazi Jew-Baiting in America—II, published in *The Nation* of May 8, reference is made on page 531 to a certain handbill, "The Lindbergh Baby Affair." In that connection the article states:

> Precisely when and where it was printed is not certain at the moment but I shall not be surprised if final investigation proves that it was set up by the Zenger Press, of 308 East Forty-sixth Street, and printed by the Hubner Press, situated at the corner of Lafayette and White Streets. According to very reliable information 3,000 copies of the handbill were printed but only 300 were distributed. The remaining 2,700 were destroyed because "the police showed an interest in them."

F. Hubner and Company, Inc., printers, of 54-60 Lafayette Street, New York, explain in a letter that their firm is not the Hubner Press referred to and that it has never had any connection with that organization. In referring to the Hubner Press the author of the article did not have in mind F. Hubner and Company. To the best of our knowledge that company is a reliable and honorable concern. The reference was to a different group entirely, doing business under the name of The Hubner Press. At the moment investigations of this company are not complete, but as soon as full information is available, we shall be glad to notify F. Hubner and Company, Inc., and to publish the facts if they are of sufficient importance.—Editors The Nation.

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Labor and Industry

"Class Angle It"

By HEYWOOD BROUN

A GOOD deal of fun has been poked at ardent radicals who see capitalist plots even in the stones and running brooks. I have done some of the poking myself. And there are a dozen anecdotes about the manner in which the true revolutionist will endeavor to propagandize through whatever medium he touches. One of the most familiar is the undoubtedly apochryphal tale that Bob Minor, sitting in the slot at the *Daily Worker*, tossed over a City News Bulletin to a rewrite man and said, "Auto crash between a Lincoln and a Buick—class angle that, will you!"

I used to think that was a very funny yarn and I would print it pretty regularly twice a year. It doesn't seem to me quite as funny any more, and of late I have had a growing belief that when it comes to "class angling," the reactionary groups are far more active than the radicals. Or, at any rate, they are in control of a greater amount of material with which they can play. I do not suppose that Nicholas Murray Butler actually issued a secret communiqué to every Pulitzer judge urging him to bear sharp right in his decisions but the end result was the same. The power of making awards seems to have been lodged in the hands of gentlemen who are expert in distinguishing between dry bread and that which is buttered.

The swing has always been in favor of the so-called safe and sane but I can remember no year in which the Pulitzer awards have been so definitely class angled. In all fairness the critics who have waxed merry over some of the aspects of proletarian literature should take cognizance of the fact that it takes two groups at least to create class consciousness. The full list of Pulitzer prizes in the 1935 award makes so pretty a picture of stout-bellied men running for their lives that it is hard not to believe it must have been premeditated. And still it may be that the retreat from the left was wholly instinctive.

Any critic worth his salt ought to admit that the dramatic season which has just ended was distinguished for one thing alone. I refer to the emergence of the radical young playwright called Clifford Odets. I am not going to quarrel with the reviewer who asserts that nevertheless "The Petrified Forest" is a better play than "Waiting for Lefty," or that "Merrily We Roll Along" was more shrewdly constructed than "Awake and Sing." But surely if the Pulitzer plan were really intended to foster cultural progress, it should lean to the recognition of new forces rather than the perpetuation of stencils. And yet, although there has been some bickering because the melodramatic "Children's Hour" was passed up, none of the judges, nor even their hecklers, has raised much of an outcry about the neglect of Clifford Odets.

The life of Robert E. Lee could hardly have escaped the laurel since Pulitzer judges of biography are invariably bowled over by anything in four volumes. I have no sharp quarrel with either the prize-winning poems or the novel although both are firmly set in the paths of tradition. But the awards in journalism might just as well have been made by Harding or Hoover. In fact they are so glaringly prejudiced that they defeat their own ends. Surely it is not unfair to say that in a year of prodigious economic ferment and strife the American press stands convicted as incompetent if it is really true that the most distinguished reporting during the year was a series of pieces on the international yacht races. If that is true, what sort of men were assigned to cover the San Francisco general strike, or the drought, or the Scottsboro case?

Without intending to do so the Pulitzer Committee has lent aid and comfort to all of us who believe that save for one or two exceptions such as the work of Louis Stark in the New York *Times* labor news is both manhandled and underplayed in American newspapers.

The particular investigation for which the Sacramento *Bee* received a prize may have been worthy enough. I am not familiar with either the material or its treatment. But surely the judges would not have been departing from the line of duty if they had taken into consideration the general character of the publication which they delighted to honor. The last issue of the *Bee* which I encountered contained a ringing editorial attacking an Episcopal bishop as a dangerous radical on account of a defense of civil liberties which he made at a California church convention. The *Bee* has been in the very forefront of the red hysteria along our Western coast. It is tainted with that form of fascism which cries for the creation of vigilantes. Surely the Pulitzer Committee should have taken these facts into consideration before pinning a rose on the *Bee*. Come to think of it perhaps the committee did.

The prize-winning cartoon was another direct slap at labor under the guise of magnificent neutrality. It would be idle to say that no union in the long history of economic strife has ever had recourse to the use of hired thugs, but that hardly justifies a picture which says that the responsibility for shooting and slugging during a strike by imported gangsters is equally divided between capital and labor. After all there are no great and successful agencies built up around the business of renting out ruffians to labor unions. It is not the unions which have the privilege of swearing in special deputies or setting up machine-gun nests and vantage-points for the sprayers of tear gas. Even the most casual examination of the list of dead and wounded in any labor war will prove that at least 90 per cent of the violence comes from within the walls of the plant. Captains of industry in private conversation are quite frank to admit that capital can no longer expect to win without an immediate resort to violence. The National Guard does not come into a community to bring peace but a sword.

Arthur Krock's neatly varnished pieces from Washington represented the best correspondence done by an American journalist during the year, and you, dear reader, are Marie of Rumania.

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How I Won a Rent Strike

By E. A. PURCELL

OUR landlord raised the rent in our apartment house two dollars a room, and those who claimed that they could not meet his increase were summarily threatened with eviction. Since similar apartments in the same neighborhood were available at lower rentals, the increase seemed unwarranted. It was, we learned, "a precautionary measure" on the part of a certain bank that was acting as receiver for the property. So I, as a member of the Unemployment Councils, and two other tenants in the house decided to organize a rent strike in protest against the increase and the evictions.

Two days of intensive work culminated in an enthusiastic meeting of the tenants in one of the apartments. The next morning the sidewalk in front of the apartment house was lined with a threatening array of police—on foot, mounted, and in cars. They were there, we were told, merely to protect the interests of the bank. We decided to call a strike then and there before the police should have an opportunity to terrify the tenants.

However, to make the strike completely effective, it was necessary to overcome the pessimism of a few recalcitrants. One woman whom I went to see pretended great sympathy for the work of the Unemployment Councils and lively enthusiasm for the strike. I was surprised, because at the meeting on the previous evening both she and her husband had expressed themselves as strongly against the strike. While she encouraged me to talk, however, her husband listened for a while in the next room and then slipped quietly out to inform the police that a "dangerous red" was about to take the house by storm.

It was a golden moment for the police. They had been waiting for some such opportunity to make an arrest in connection with the strike and they sprang instantly into action. Without ceremony two of them appeared and grabbed me viciously by the collar. When I protested and tried to explain what I was doing, they struck me on the head. Later, as the fracas continued, they blackened one of my eyes and inflicted other injuries. Then I was dragged to the police station and booked on a charge of felonious assault. "He hit a guy with a piece of iron pipe," one of the policemen explained to the lieutenant. Then, to divert attention from the fact that I was vigorously protesting against this charge, he launched into an enthusiastic description of my bloodthirsty behavior and suggested that I must have suddenly gone "nuts." At the conclusion of his talk a hammer was produced and labeled as the lethal weapon.

The harder I tried to explain the situation, the worse matters became. Mention of the rent strike and the Unemployment Councils merely increased the abusive treatment I was receiving. In unreasoning rage I struck out foolishly, although my head was swimming from the blows I had received and one eye already swollen shut. The next thing I knew I found myself fastened in a chair with my legs strapped to the rounds and my hands trussed behind the chair. A broom handle was then inserted in the knot holding my hands and twisted around from time to time by way of emphasis, until I almost screamed.

When this diversion palled on the two policemen they began hitting me on the side of the head in a sort of rhythm, batting me back and forth between them as though I were a ball. Almost unconscious by this time, I would fall farther and farther on my side after each blow, only to be knocked back again in the sadistic manner so painfully familiar to laborers or political agitators who are unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the police. Feeling that I had nothing to lose by one last attempt to retaliate, because it was fairly obvious that I should be killed if I stayed where I was, I threw myself forward, pulling the chair over with me. Biting and defending myself in a half-insane manner, I rolled around on the floor with what seemed to be half the police force on top of me. But it was of course a lost cause, and I was soon unconscious.

When I came to, I was taking a clanging journey in an ambulance. An attempt to move my arms revealed the disconcerting fact that I was in a strait-jacket. The other passengers were a policeman, a man in a white coat who turned out to be a doctor, and a drunken old woman who had been picked up on a charge of vagrancy. As soon as the policeman saw that I was conscious he began to abuse me, calling me a "dirty Jew" and asking me who the hell I thought I was. The old woman, who had seemed to be only half-conscious, aroused herself and muttered angrily: "Why don't you leave the boy alone? He's hurt, and he ain't bothering you none. Shame on you!" "Shut up," the policeman snarled at her, "or I'll give you some of the same medicine." However, he looked slightly uncomfortable and said nothing more to me.

Soon we drew up before the gloomy walls of Bellevue, where, it was explained to me, I was scheduled for a stay in the prison ward. I was routed through the usual entrance procedure in spite of the fact that I was so ill I could scarcely stand. My head and nose were bleeding, my face was swollen, and I was bruised from head to foot. In fact, my appearance was so startling that a gunman in the cot next to me in the prison ward, after one hasty look in my direction, tearfully begged to be moved. "It makes me noivous to look at him," he explained. After I had been put to bed, I was examined by the prison doctors, who decided that my skull had probably been fractured. So a lumbar puncture was ordered. This process involves drawing a vial of cerebral-spinal fluid from the base of the spine by means of hypodermic needles. If the fluid shows any blood, it indicates that the skull has been fractured.

Under the most favorable circumstances a lumbar puncture is probably trying; in the prison ward it seemed actually dangerous. After the specimen has been drawn, the patient is supposed to lie perfectly motionless, flat on his back, for twenty-four hours, so that the spinal fluid will have an opportunity to replenish itself. In my own case this procedure apparently was not followed with sufficient scientific exactness, with the result that I now have agonizing

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pains in my head a great deal of the time. Perhaps my disability may be traced to the fact that detectives, intent on taking my fingerprints, shook my shoulder very roughly when I tried to tell them that I was under doctor's orders not to be disturbed. Finally they went grumbling away, only to discover that they had been sent to get the fingerprints of a safe-blower who was also lying wounded in the ward.

The test revealed that my skull had not been fractured, and in a few days I felt better. I soon discovered that I was the object of much concern to the other prisoners. In some strange, subterranean way the rumor that I was a "dangerous red" had spread, and the hardened criminals in the ward regarded me with a strange mixture of instinctive sympathy and inimical curiosity.

"Do you want to know what I think is wrong with this revolution you're always talking about, buddy?" one of them inquired. Although I had not mentioned the revolution, I told him that I did.

"Well, the trouble is that the workers is all so dumb," my informant said condescendingly. "I can't have any sympathy for such saps. They work for eight dollars a week, and what do they get out of it? Now I'm a forger," he announced proudly, "and I make big money when I work. Six thousand here and ten thousand there. Of course, I'm a sap, too, sometimes," he added more sadly, "or I wouldn't be in this lousy hole now."

A furtive little man wistfully remarked, "I don't see how you guys is ever going to start a revolution when there are so many bulls and dicks around. A guy can't get away with anything with them hanging around all the time."

In every respect, though, the prison ward was a haven of peace and pleasure compared with the psychopathic ward, where I spent the last two nights of my ten-day stay in Bellevue. Several new patients were admitted to the prison ward, which meant that it was badly crowded. The authorities decided to lessen the congestion by assigning me to a bed in the psychopathic ward for the last two nights. There I found groups of patients in every corner, diagnosing each other's psychoses, comparing notes on the leading hospitals for the criminal insane, and describing various murderous exploits in which they had figured. This was their only diversion. Nervous and unable to sleep the first night, I went into the washroom to smoke a cigar that had been given me by a visitor that afternoon. Soon a man whose face was a crisscross pattern of scars appeared and asked me to let him have a few puffs. I handed over the cigar. Before putting it into his mouth, he wrapped several layers of tissue paper around the end of it. "I like to observe all these little sanitary precautions," he remarked. After a few puffs he replaced the tissue paper with some fresh folds and handed the cigar back to me. Thus we smoked it in rotation, and when we had finished he said thoughtfully, "I'm glad we were careful about smoking that cigar, because I have a venereal disease and I wouldn't want to give it to you."

The second night was practically a repetition of the first. Despite my exhaustion I couldn't sleep, and in the morning my head continued to ache with increasing and almost alarming violence. My left eye was still black and swollen shut and one side of my face was distended and sore. In this condition, however, I had to go to court because my case was being heard.

In the anteroom leading to the court chamber I talked to the lawyer who had been assigned to my case by the International Labor Defense. He asked me if I knew that conviction on a charge of felonious assault carried with it a two-year prison term. I explained that I hadn't hit anyone with a piece of iron pipe or a hammer and commented on the fact that the charge against me was obviously framed because the bank that was receiver of the property feared that the rent strike, if successful, might foreshadow more extensive activities in the neighborhood.

All of us, including the man who had brought the charge against me and the police involved in the case, were finally taken before the judge. One of the policemen enthusiastically told the story of my homicidal activities with the piece of iron pipe. His tale was somewhat feebly corroborated by the man who had brought the charge against me. He gave the impression of being ashamed of himself and looked as though he wished he were well out of an unpleasant situation.

The judge noticed my black eye and swollen face. "He seems to have been hurt himself," he said. "How did he get hurt?"

"He fell down, Your Honor," one of the policemen glibly told him. "He fell down and hit himself while we was trying to arrest him."

There was a pause. Even the district attorney seemed embarrassed by this obvious fabrication. Then, to my astonishment, I heard him petition that the charge against me be reduced from felonious assault to disorderly conduct and that sentence be suspended.

The judge appeared as surprised as I was. "I don't understand this," he said. "Why should I change the charge from felonious assault to disorderly conduct? And if this young Communist is guilty, why should I suspend sentence?" He pronounced the words "young Communist" with bitter disgust. After a slight pause he continued, "However, I am sorry from the depth of my heart for the defendant and I should much rather convict the active leaders of the movement than the innocent people whose minds they prey upon."

I protested that I was not being tried for my political convictions and was told from the bench to keep quiet. I was surprised, though, to discover that all pretense of a charge of felonious assault had evidently been dropped and that the political implications of the situations were being admitted. I was taken out again to the anteroom, while the judge, my lawyer, and the policeman involved in the case conferred. The purpose of this little talk was evidently to convince the judge that the charge against me should be changed, because as soon as I returned he announced that I had been convicted of disorderly conduct but that sentence would be suspended for "the tenure of good behavior."

The police looked relieved and soon drifted out in an embarrassed way. There is but one explanation of their behavior and of the outcome of the whole situation: they knew that the I. L. D., with its very effective methods of exposing police tactics, would fight a prison sentence and reveal their unenviable position.

After my release I discovered that the bank had thought better of its two-dollar raise in rent and that the tenants had not been evicted. So my headache was not incurred altogether in vain.

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Books, Drama, Films

Myth as Progress

Young Joseph. By Thomas Mann. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

PERHAPS the most common of the objections raised in this country against the two volumes of Thomas Mann's trilogy that have so far appeared has been the familiar one that here again a very distinguished modern writer has turned his back on his own time and sought refuge from its vicissitudes in the depiction of a remote and semi-mythical past. Mann has been denounced as an "escapist"; he has been advised by journalists to be more journalistic in his choice of materials. The implication is that any novelist who does not serve up last month's news in his works is irretrievably lost to reality. What such an objection actually reveals, of course, is the lamentably short view of so much recent book criticism, its failure to recognize a fact which even the hastiest survey of the literary past would make evident. The fact to which one refers is the preference on the part of all the more notable members of that past, from the Greek tragic poets to such more recent figures as Goethe and Flaubert, for expressing their sense of the present, or what they believed to be most essential in their present, against a more or less remote background of time. The use of a mythical or distantly historical framework for the communication of profound and universal themes has only in our time been considered an escape from what Mann in another work refers to as "the cynical aspersions of the present." When Sophocles gave vent to his feelings about filial ingratitude in the guise of blind Oedipus at Colonus, when Shakespeare raged against mankind through the lips of Timon of Athens, when Racine made Berenice and Mithridates the spokesmen of his seventeenth-century morality, it is not recorded that their contemporaries found anything unusual or suspect in the convention. Indeed, it would seem, from the examples of the past, that it is the mark of the great writer always to project the deepest experience of his own time in terms of some earlier period in human history. And it gives perhaps further strength to their claims to greatness that both Joyce and Mann, at about the same time and in the full maturity of their powers, have returned to the mythical in their fiction.

Even more than its predecessor does the present volume reveal the appropriateness of the particular myth which Mann has chosen for his trilogy. For here as elsewhere he is concerned with solving the mystery of the recurrent and often indistinguishable processes of life and death; and Joseph, as is clear from the beautiful early chapter in the grove of Adonis, is to be identified with all those half-human, half-divine creatures in every religion who rehearse in their careers the whole cycle of birth, death, and regeneration. It is this sense of the role that he has to play which induces in Joseph, according to Mann's elaboration of his character, that peculiar arrogance of spirit which in turn forces the brothers to be the unconscious agents of his destiny. When the brothers throw him into the well and later haggle over his prostrate body with the Midianites, they are not so much acting as letting things "happen." The ritual has occurred before and it will occur again but it must be carried out to the letter. Despite their envy and rage and final brutality, the brothers are good, simple folk; and Mann has delineated each of them, especially the soft and indecisive Reuben, with such fairness of understanding that it is hard not to share their resentment against the vain, brilliant, spoiled son of Rachel, the true wife. But Joseph is the man of imagination, the dreamer of dreams, the shaper of future races and religions. He is "the bearer of the blessing." And if one understands this often repeated phrase aright it amounts to saying that in him is embodied the whole moral and spiritual heritage of mankind, the principle of true human progress, the triumph over the material in every time and place; ". . . for the life of mankind cometh to an end several times, and each time cometh the grave and the rebirth, and many times must he be, until at length he finally is."

Besides dispelling more completely the notion that Mann is indulging in some crudely romantic escape into the past, this second volume is in its more strictly creative presentation of character and background superior to the first. Except for a few pages relating Joseph's education at the hands of Eliezer, there are none of those prolonged excursions into the abstract which halted the narrative progress in the earlier book. Instead there are some of the most memorable dramatic passages in the whole range of Mann's work: the conversation between Joseph and little Benjamin in the myrtle grove, the wheedling of Rachel's bridal veil from the doting Jacob, the savage attack of the brothers at the end. And the book is written in a prose which comes through in Mrs. Lowe-Porter's translation as the exquisite culmination of one of the great self-conscious literary styles of our age.

WILLIAM TROY

Not Proved

Handout. By George Michael. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.

PROPAGANDA at the capital is a theme deserving penetrating and balanced treatment. No one familiar with Washington will deny that there is official propaganda. As democracy functions there is bound to be, for it is a perpetual conflict of the pros and cons, with each side striving to score on the other. This may not suit the factualists, but it is inescapable.

Propaganda is the attempt to influence the public by a partisan presentation or misstatement of facts masked as an objective statement. The mask is the danger, but it is dangerous only if it succeeds in taking the public in. The Roosevelt Administration has been attacked for trying to make the radio and the press subservient instruments of propaganda. If it had not tried to do so it would be a queer Administration. It is not the attempt which needs to be demonstrated but its success.

To say that the Roosevelt Administration wishes to influence the public is to assert a truism; to say it has done so by propaganda is to convict the agencies of public opinion of servility and incompetence. "Handout," with naive indignation, sets out to prove that the Administration has put itself in the position to make propaganda skilfully. But it fails to show that the press or the radio have been negligent or spineless. Take the radio, for example. The writer builds up a case; radio stations must renew their licenses every six months; the power of renewal lies with the Radio Commission; the commissioners are appointed by the President subject to instant dismissal; hence the President can force radio stations to do his bidding. What is the result? For a time, though I think for other reasons, the stations did not permit much criticism of the Administration, but that time has passed, and this book does not deal with that aspect of the matter. What it says is that the Washington station WJS (Columbia) "sprays" the station WOR when Father Coughlin is speaking on it. One is to conclude that the President tells Columbia to increase the power at WJS while Father Coughlin is on the air, and Columbia, for fear of losing its license, complies. It is difficult to understand how such drivel is accepted for publication. In

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the first place, Washington listeners regularly hear Father Coughlin without interference. In the second place, the radio chains have given the microphone to Huey Long for the most outspoken attacks on the President that the most ardent believer in free speech could ask for.

This characterizes the frivolity with which much of the book is written. Anyone acquainted with Washington newspaper work will find it bristling with inaccuracies. Dr. Ernest Gruening, for example, is listed as belonging to the propaganda section of the Interior Department, but so is every writer now employed by the government branded a propagandist. The absurd charge is made that the President at his press conferences does not answer questions of which Secretary Early has not had a day's notice. Considerable space is given to *The Nation's* article on justice in the Virgin Islands and its inadvertent importance in the Ickes-Farley feud, but the writer did not even read the article, as he describes its contents falsely. The account of the purge at the AAA is a travesty of serious reporting. This book, instead of offering a wise study of propaganda—its technique, its success, and the defense of democracy against it—is itself propaganda at a low level.

RAYMOND GRAM SWING

On the Seamy Side

A World to Win. By Jack Conroy. Covici-Friede. $2.50.

IN his second novel Jack Conroy has progressed beyond the loosely episodic and autobiographical structure of his first, "The Disinherited." Both major and minor architectural intentions can be discerned, though they are imperfectly worked out. Two half-brothers, Robert and Leo, one with a professional white-collar tradition from his mother, the other with a migratory-worker tradition from his father, grow up together in a small Missouri community. Robert's mother—a Winesburg, Ohio, repressed virgin—feebly literary, marries the Irish worker Terry, whom she takes in as a lodger with his small son. Later, after producing Robert Browning to fulfil her literary aspirations for her, she goes violently religious with a sect of Holy Rollers in the neighborhood; affronted by her stepson's adolescent sex adventures, she drives him out into the world. Young Robert Browning had told on his half-brother and is in consequence regarded with contempt by father and half-brother. Part of the intention of the book is the final establishment of cordial understanding among these three. Robert spends a year at the state university and meets an intelligent Jewish Communist, but with a sure instinct for the wrong person he chooses as friend a pseudo-intellectual Gentile, and after taking a job as clerk in the city, he plays around with his friend's inane, posturing, arty, lecherous group, and tries to write. He lives in a childless free union with a girl who presently, when the depression deepens, has to support him. Leo, equipped with a wife, five children, and a factory job, reappears, but the job fades away, and the two brothers are squeezed tighter and tighter by the depression. Now and then they catch a glimpse of the militant class struggle, but they are very dull about learning that the workers of the world should unite. The tale ends when Leo—who has had to watch his wife die in childbirth in a ditch—is thrust by sheer accident into momentary leadership of a riot of the unemployed and is rescued from a policeman by his brother; the result of these events being that both of them have no option but to get into the class struggle on the right—meaning the left—side.

The merits of Jack Conroy's first book are present in this; he has descriptive power when he is telling what jobs feel like, what being jobless feels like, what a strike riot, a steel factory, a beet field, a "Roosevelt roost" of the derelicts are like. But his power to convey the quality of personal relationships and to develop character through the experiences of years is very uneven. Too often, when the plan of the book calls for such power, he falls into what Henry James called the platitude of statement; as in the scene where Robert bids goodby to his father and statements are made about emotions that are totally unrealized. Mr. Conroy might well follow the example of his fellow proletarian novelist, Robert Cantwell, and study Henry James, whose dictum applies to bourgeois and proletarian fiction alike: What is merely stated is not presented; what is not presented is not vivid; what is not vivid is not represented, and what is not represented is not art.

It is the custom of the moment to talk about what proletarian fiction should be and do. Two—probably un-Marxian—reflections aroused by this novel are here offered. One is that the proletarian novelist should bring out more often than he does the implications in the battle-cry "a world to win." The phrase "nothing to lose" is usually fully documented in such fiction. The life of the disinherited, as pictured by Kromer, Conroy, Greenwood, and the rest, is life on terms that should be rejected—militantly. But what about the world to be won? The values of that possible world should be glimpsed, realized in some tiny measure, seen operating in more fortunate lives. Take babies, for instance. Leo has five. They are presented with the kind of detail that would make it pardonable for anyone to throw out the baby with the diapers. There should be occasional hints of how nice babies can be under decent conditions. It can be done. Grace Lumpkin, Martin Nexö, and others have done it. Or take universities and professors—a wretched spectacle under capitalism; but there must be values, lingering in dark corners of the library or even in a classroom, worth bringing to light, and worth forming a part of that world to be won. The second reflection is about the danger of so presenting the decay, weakness, futility of the world we want to lose—its violences, irrationalities, disgusting cops and capitalists and intellectuals and vigilantes—that the militant worker will think all one has to do is to poke it hard and it will melt into putrescence. Leave the demonstration of decay to the bourgeois novelists. Let the proletarian novelists face the strength that remains in the system, attack its strongest citadels. The "Sailors of Cattaro" was one of the finest proletarian plays precisely because the naval officer on the fleet who outwitted the mutineers embodied the strength of the old order: skill in strategy, grasp of practical psychology, resourcefulness, disciplined self-control, tact—all displayed in the service of a cause which the sympathetic spectator hoped eagerly would lose. But it won, for the moment; the opposition would be no match for it till that opposition developed among its leaders and fighters greater resourcefulness, keener intelligence, better strategy. Knocking out an unsuspecting policeman—that final gesture of Robert's—may be a good beginning. But what is required to capture the fleet?

DOROTHY BREWSTER

The Conservatives' England

The People's King. By John Buchan. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.75.

The Reign of George V. By D. C. Somervell. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.

BOTH Mr. Buchan and Mr. Somervell have sat in the House of Commons; both of them are moderate conservatives who are loyal, according to their lights, to what is good as well as to what is bad in the English tradition—to its maintenance of individual freedom and of representative government as well as to its class system, to its freedom from militarism at home as well as to its imperialism abroad.

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Both of them display the same prejudices—the same conviction that Germany was responsible for the World War, the same inability to see in the Russian Revolution anything but a catastrophe, the same confidence that British institutions will surmount the present crisis. They have essentially the same story to tell, since both of them are content to give us a chronicle of political events since 1910, saying little about the cultural and social developments which accompanied them and not attempting to decipher the meaning of the changes which they have recorded. Mr. Buchan gives more attention to the life of the king, which Mr. Somervell discusses only in his last eight pages; but Mr. Somervell has more to say about other topics, particularly about the post-war period. Mr. Buchan writes better English: some of his descriptions and his analyses of character have a genuine eloquence, though at times his love for the ornate leads him into a grotesque mixed metaphor. On the other hand, Mr. Somervell's narrative of events is considerably more objective and more comprehensive.

Either of these books may be taken as representing the point of view of the central mass of English public opinion—that solid block of instincts which are still mainly healthy and of opinions which have always been mainly irrational—which has undergone the storms of the last quarter of a century without moving appreciably either to the left or to the right. Both Mr. Buchan and Mr. Somervell respect the Labor Party, as long as it does not put its principles into practice; they admire the English workingman, as long as he is not led astray by Marxist dogmas; they approve of self-government for India, as long as British interests are protected; they dislike fascism, but not so intensely as they dislike communism; and they feel that Great Britain may properly congratulate herself on her achievements during the war and afterward.

Mr. Buchan and Mr. Somervell stress the epic note. Great Britain is victorious in a titanic conflict and may afterward be expected to collect her laurels and live prosperously. To future generations the mood of tragedy will probably seem to have been more appropriate, nor, unfortunately, have we yet reached the final act: for the tragic hero is one who has involved himself unwittingly, and yet by his own act, in the coils of destiny, and who must suffer the full penalty before destiny releases him. In such a tragedy Mr. Buchan and Mr. Somervell may be regarded not as members of the chorus but as embodiments of the protagonist in those moments when he speaks words of tragic irony. We must agree with them when they protest that nobody of influence in Great Britain wanted war in 1914, but it does not follow that some other nation must have been guilty; Great Britain played her part in that concatenation of events which led inexorably, and yet against the will of almost everybody, to the crisis. We must agree with them again when they declare that after the war Great Britain wanted, in the main, fair treatment for Germany; and yet the khaki election of 1918 and the weaknesses of English diplomacy were partly responsible for the lunacy of Versailles; and every day it becomes more probable that for her share in that treaty Great Britain will be forced to pay an even heavier price than in 1914. We must agree with them again when they praise the freedom from hysteria which has characterized the British public during the world crisis; but when they hail the return of prosperity, we must point out that a prosperity still largely dependent on the foreign market may disappear even more quickly than it came, and that a recovery which offers no employment to two million workers and which reduces the dole to thirty shillings a week is no true recovery at all. Sooner or later men must realize that in this epoch none of the traditional loyalties, however admirable in themselves, can atone for a refusal to understand the tendencies of our economic system, and that when catastrophes occur, nobody is innocent and everybody is responsible.

Those citizens of Great Britain who died in the last war, or who may die in the next war, can be regarded as victims of destiny. But destiny is merely a word, and what it means is the network of events woven by private individuals, whose actions are not regulated by a collective consciousness and a collective will. The next task of mankind is to achieve that collective consciousness and to become master of its own destiny. It is with a patriotism more genuine than Mr. Buchan's or Mr. Somervell's, because it is understanding and no longer blind, that an English poet says to those Englishmen whose eyes are turned only to what their country has achieved in the past:

> You that love England, who have an ear for her music, . . .
> Listen. Can you not hear the entrance of a new theme?

H. B. Parkes

Papa 'poléon

Napoleon's Letters to Marie Louise. With a Commentary by Charles de la Roncière. Farrar and Rinehart. $3.

IMPARTIAL posterity, that final arbiter to which all eighteenth-century heroes and heroines commended their careers, has not been unkind to the great Napoleon. He was not above prompting it a little, viz., in his energetic scrivening at St. Helena, but that was not unseemly in a man who strove ever to "deserve well of mankind." On the whole he would have no cause for complaint about posterity's reception of these three hundred-odd autograph letters that he wrote to Marie Louise between 1810 and 1814, which recently and mysteriously came to light at a London auction. A grateful *patrie* reverently bid for them; a reputable firm of American publishers hastened their translation in a most elegant edition; W. E. W., whoever he or she may be, has provided a lofty introduction, and M. de la Roncière, chief custodian of the Bibliothèque Nationale, has written a running commentary and also a foreword which is as eulogistic as it should be of "these priceless relics of an immortal man"—and of a booklover, may we add, who once wrote to his Empress: "You can present the university [of Vienna] with a collection of books and engravings. This . . . will cost you nothing. I have plenty of them." This being the case, it is almost a pious duty to record that here and there the translator has retained in English the spirit of Napoleon's sallies against the French language and that the anonymous commentator on the paintings which are reproduced has not lagged behind the Emperor in his versatile interpretation of historical events.

Piety apart, what is the worth of these highly publicized letters which the jacket describes lyrically as "the most important historical discovery of our time"? That they are interesting and valuable no one will presume to deny. That they seriously modify our basic knowledge or understanding of the great man I do hasten to deny. Some of them confirm, as only personal correspondence can, important points of information derived from other sources, as for instance the fact that the weather was exceptionally clement when Napoleon began his retreat from Moscow or that confusion and panic reigned in the Allied headquarters in March, 1814. For the most part they successfully conceal the real situation, as of necessity letters of this sort should do.

Their interest and value lie first in their vivid and ingenuous, and occasionally boring and repetitious, corroboration of the thousand and one facts that Masson, Lévy, and other hagiolators have already assembled on the score of Marie Louise and Napoleon. To be sure it should always be borne in mind that in interpreting their facts these apologists, as Gibbon said of the Christian historians of the fourth century, scorned the

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profane virtues of sobriety and moderation. More important still, these letters supply the necessary material for a sounder and deeper understanding of Napoleon's attitude toward his Hapsburg bride.

Up to the time of Napoleon's first abdication neither of the principals to this marriage of convenience had cause to regret the arrangement. Marie Louise had lost nothing by moving from Schönbrunn to the Tuileries and gained a good deal—prestige, a child, a kindly, considerate husband, even though or perhaps because he was middle-aged, a husband ludicrously or pathetically devoted to their child and, for her, a model of deference and well-tempered affection. Napoleon was idyllically content. His new wife was young and fresh. She had given him an heir. She was his "good Louise," gentle, responsive, and dutiful—a bit of golden clay for him to fashion. He fashioned it and gazed with gratitude and loving admiration upon his creation, and with the assurance that she and the young King of Rome were a pledge against disaster.

This the letters make very clear. It is certain that they will add to his admirers. Already enthroned as the emperor of the peasants, honored as the Prometheus of the idealists and the mystics, worshiped as the god of the militarists, Napoleon has within his reach the final honor of being transformed into *le bon papa 'poléon*, the idol of the green-grocer's wife.

LEO GERSHOY

Shorter Notices

The Narrow Land. By Elizabeth Reynard. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

In this rich, altogether charming book Miss Reynard has brought together the long and varied sequences of stories and legends relating to Cape Cod. She says at the outset that she is offering her own interpretations, and both the narratives and their arrangement show an individual style, but her materials have been faithfully studied and their integrity kept. She begins with a bold reconstruction of the Norse voyages and of the characters who dominated them, passes to legends of the Nauset Wampanoags, some of which are still told by Cape Indians, and follows with the mixed and highly colorful lore of the white settlers as it has developed through three hundred years. Highly significant is the mingling of white and Indian fancy in some of these stories, particularly those relating to places in the "narrow land." Well-known characters appear, from Richard Bourne to Black Bellamy and Captain Kidd. The pranks of pukwudgees, witches, ghosts, and sand dobbies among the Puritans and their descendants make delightful reading. These tales might perhaps alter certain fixed notions about that famous race and its preoccupations. Miss Reynard knows the history and changing life of the Cape through and through, so that even at their airiest her stories are always dimensional. She comes down well toward the present with tales of "ghosts who still walk" and some prime yarns of the sea.

Shoulder the Sky. By James Gray. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50.

This second novel by a Minnesota newspaperman is half a study of modern, upper-middle-class marriage, half a romance. Mr. Gray's hero is a morbidly sensitive young Minnesota doctor; his heroine is less finely organized, a conventionally "difficult," highly educated woman. Out of their mutual neuroses a marriage is hatched. Against a background of sickness and little-theater productions, cocktail parties and bank failures, the married pair executes a complicated and painful emotional dance, in which approach forever alternates with withdrawal, till each partner seems condemned to an eternal *pas seul.* Mr. Gray renders this dissonance so truly and so bitterly that one can even excuse him for turning magician on the next to the last page and transforming all into miraculous harmony. It is not the artificial happy ending which keeps this excellent minor novel from being a first-class work of fiction. It is, rather, that Mr. Gray, though he has a fine and subtle perception of the man-woman relationship, fails to particularize it into perfect believability. His characters exist only as symbols of their class, period, and sex; their dialogue is not human conversation but stylized smart talk. Thus in the end the novel lacks body. It is moving and it is true, but it has all the basic chilliness of a lengthy and fine-spun generalization.

In Time of Peace. By Thomas Boyd. Minton, Balch and Company. $2.50.

It is unusual to find a proletarian novel which is not violent enough for the most sensational taste. Yet it must be confessed that "In Time of Peace," Thomas Boyd's last work, is too placid to realize the revolutionary intent. It continues the story of Hicks, the protagonist of the war novel "Through the Wheat," carrying him through boom times, through marriage and a successful, moneyed career as a newspaperman, down to the crisis, the depression, and ultimate personal failure. It is the tale of a man's brief apostasy to the working class, his surrender to capitalist interests, and their inevitable betrayal of him. To the execution of this theme Thomas Boyd brought honesty and care and fidelity of observation, but these are not enough. Such a theme demands harshness, bitterness, intensity of feeling; even a display of pyrotechnics would not have been unseemly. Lacking these things, Mr. Boyd's novel for all its seriousness of purpose falls into the large and useless class of plodding, studiously lifelike novels, which are read to pass the time away, and whose scenes and characters are so well padded with comfortable verbal realism that they are easily forgotten.

The Time Is Ripe. By Walter Greenwood. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Walter Greenwood's first novel caused considerable fanfare in British critical circles. He was hailed as England's first important proletarian novelist. He was compared to Bennett, to Wells, to American revolutionary writers. Hogarth was mentioned and so was Shakespeare. All these comparisons are fantastic, and the éclat with which so meager a talent was received speaks badly for the vitality of British letters. With Shakespeare and Hogarth left out of the question, it still must be said at once that Greenwood does not exist in the same arena with Dos Passos or Halper or Cantwell, and that he is but a bad, lifeless stepchild of Wells and Bennett. His new novel, "The Time Is Ripe," should be proof enough of this. It is a dull, mechanical story, barely animated by the breath of revolution. The plot is familiar—the ancient success story, cast in what is doubtless meant to be a new and ironical light. Edgar Hargraves, the central figure, is a greedy, ambitious shopkeeper who inherits a sizable fortune and thereby becomes Lord Mayor of an English industrial town. While one watches the rise of Mr. Hargraves to his final position of eminence, one follows also the fall of Mrs. Shuttleworth, his former charwoman, whom he has had imprisoned for a picayune theft. The bare struts of this simple piece of architecture are almost everywhere evident. Mr. Greenwood has been unable to create characters to fill out his structure. He sees neither into Mr. Hargraves's heart nor into Mrs. Shuttleworth's. He has a knack of transcribing the Lancashire dialect on the printed page which gives his novel an air of superficial veracity, and he is one of the few English writers who show any consciousness of the class struggle, but these are his only virtues.

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Drama

"Best Play"

"THE OLD MAID," dramatized by Zoë Akins from a story by Edith Wharton, is not the best American play of the year. Neither is "Personal Appearance" nor "Merrily We Roll Along," even though the three were the only ones to appear on the eligible list submitted by the "play jury" to the Pulitzer Prize Committee. There is good reason to suppose that at least one member of that jury didn't think so either, but the award is made, and, officially if not otherwise, a stagey dramatization of a conventional old plot represents the best that American playwrights could produce during the year.

To me it seems that there are only two dramas which ought to have been considered for the prize: Lillian Hellman's "The Children's Hour," which was rather generally expected to get it, and Clifford Odets's "Awake and Sing." Personally I should be inclined to hesitate long between them, because one cannot, I think, call one better than the other without implying the answer to a very fundamental question which involves the whole nature and function of the drama as a form of art.

So far as sheer power and originality are concerned Miss Hellman's play is not merely the best of the year but the best of many years past. For once at least the over-used adjective "unforgettable" is strictly appropriate, for the simple reason that no one who has been introduced to the fiendish child of the play is, literally, likely to forget her. She is at once incredible and convincing, a real tour de force, and the occasion of a rage which makes it almost impossible for the spectator to stay in his seat. Good as it is, Mr. Odets's drama of frustrated ambitions in the Bronx contains no character as strikingly original as she, and at no moment is it likely to arouse such tumult in the breast of an audience. Yet except for a hurried, crude, and obviously factitious bit at the very end, it is a better play in the sense that the spectator is led through a series of emotions to a satisfactory tragic conclusion, instead of being merely given a terrific blow and then turned dazed into the street.

The defect in "The Children's Hour" is not merely the result of what seems to me the obvious technical mistake of allowing the central character to disappear after the end of the second act and then attempting to persuade the spectator that it was not in her but in the two teachers whom she ruined that the interest centered. Whatever the original intention of the author may have been, it is plain enough that the play as it stands is a play about a Machiavellian child, not a play about two women falsely accused of a Lesbian attachment. But the mistake was made, partly at least, because the author could not imagine a satisfactory end to the real story and so gave us instead the end of a different one. Thus the technical defect is merely the result of a deeper difficulty and constitutes outward evidence of the fact that Miss Hellman could not contrive a satisfactory emotional issue for the situation she had devised.

The fundamental question is, then, whether or not "the best play" can be a play which, despite all its originality and power, does not resolve its own conflicts or reconcile the spectator to the events he has been compelled to witness. Is it enough to stir the emotions, or must any work of art prove its right to the name by resolving its own dissonances and supplying, not merely an emotional disturbance, but also an emotional satisfaction? Mr. Odets, being a "revolutionary playwright," would probably profess to care less than nothing for the Aristotelian purge or any of the aesthetic theories descended from it. Yet the fact remains that his play, unlike Miss Hellman's, provides the tragic justification for itself and shapes its own materials in such a way that they become the occasion of an experience which is not only vivid but also "aesthetic" in the sense that it can be enjoyed for its own sake. Art, so it seems to me, must do more than stir. It must also please. And for that reason my vote, if I had one, would go to "Awake and Sing."

"The Hook-Up" (Cort Theater) is the only new production of the week. Ernest Truex is amusing as usual, but there is nothing in this noisy and obvious satire on the radio to make it the candidate for any prize.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Films

Judas in Dublin

AT last this season is privileged to view a Hollywood production which for sustained brilliance of technical accomplishment can bear comparison with the best recent importations from other lands. The picture is the work of John Ford, a director who has done distinguished work before, and its story is based on one of the better novels of the sometimes powerful, sometimes incorrigibly meretricious Irish realist Liam O'Flaherty. "The Informer" (Radio City Music Hall) in Dudley Nichols's excellent version, gives a more dramatic, a more richly documented, and an even more terrifying impression of the Black and Tan troubles in Ireland in 1922 than one received from Mr. O'Flaherty's novel. This is the result partly of the greater objectivity imposed by the screen medium, partly of Mr. Ford's superior detachment toward his materials. Gypo Nolan, the underworld drifter who sells his comrade for twenty British pounds, gains in reality through being presented in terms of direct action rather than in the often diffuse interior monologues of Mr. O'Flaherty's more Dostoevskian manner. Victor McLaglen, under the superb direction, contributes to this impression of a greater solidity and roundness by giving one of the most memorable screen portrayals of the year. It matters little that the megalomania with which he endows the twisted little introvert of Mr. O'Flaherty's conception gives to the character a somewhat more heroic quality than is appropriate. The modifications of the original are all in the direction of a better realization of the character and theme in strictly cinematic terms. At the same time Mr. Ford has not ignored the drama played out in Gypo's consciousness before, during, and after the betrayal. In fact, the greatest importance of the film consists in its experimentation with the means of rendering subjective moods and states of mind on the screen. What may be called the total mood, the emotional ambience surrounding the theme and the subject, is created and sustained by the lighting—a uniform semi-darkness splotched here and there with the sinister glow of street lamps. Not only does the dimness through which people and objects are glimpsed intensify the atmosphere of hushed terror of Dublin under the Black and Tans, but it also serves to reflect the miasmic confusion of Gypo's guilt-laden consciousness. By this means outer and inner world are interfused; rarely has an American picture achieved such a consistent unity of emotional tone. It is reinforced rather than broken when doors thrust open in the fog reveal by contrast the lighted interiors of police stations, restaurants, and bawdy houses. (The scene in the middle-class lupanar is one of the most unforgettable, as it is certainly the most astonishing, in the recent American cinema.) But it is not by lighting alone that Mr. Ford has built up the unity of effect which makes this film so remarkable. Using musical

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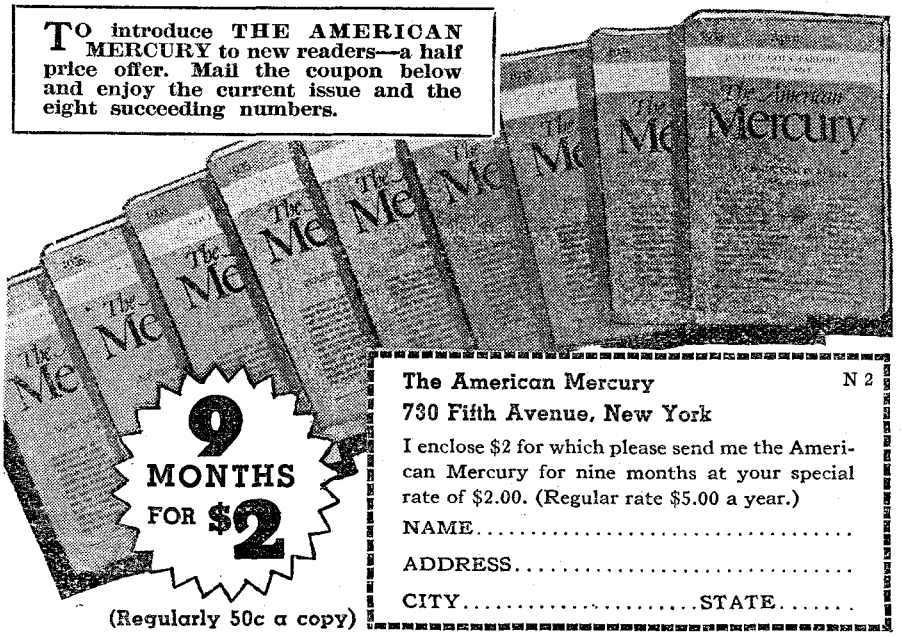

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accompaniment in the way that it was most effectively used in the silent film, recording Gypo's "second voice" or voice of conscience, and trailing both music and voices on the sound-track as a dissolve device, Mr. Ford has striven to integrate all the newer resources of the medium and restore to it that identity which it has tended to lose since the introduction of sound. What is most significant of all perhaps is Mr. Ford's rediscovery of the uses of silence. Not only is the dialogue reduced to a minimum, but it is sometimes blocked out entirely for the sake of pantomime and other effects reminiscent of the silent film. At times this leads to results which may be considered artificial and unnatural, which can be defended only as a type of stylization. When Gypo comes to the revolutionary headquarters to be examined, he and the others are forced to stand silently for several moments while a picture of his betrayed comrade burns in the fireplace. But the intention behind the effort is one of the things which make this film the best that has come out of Hollywood in a very long time.

It must be reported that Noel Coward has made his debut on the American screen in a concoction which the joint talents of Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, the producers, Lee Grimes, the camera man, and the author of "Cavalcade" and "Limehouse Blues" himself are unable to make even mildly palatable. Mr. Coward is amusing enough dispensing his epigrams as the diabolical seducer and moral moron of the New York publishing world; but in the later sections, in which he is required to rise from a watery grave in search of one mourning heart on earth, his embarrassment is as real as that of the audience. The incongruous mood of the piece arises out of the unhappy misalliance between the Mayfair-cum-Broadway sophistication of a few years back and the peculiar brand of Middle Western macabre which Mr. Hecht first developed in such works as "Erik Dorn" and "Fantazius Mallare." It is rather strange that the best scenes are those in which Alexander Woollcott, conspicuously in the flesh, presides over sessions of one of the more elegant cenacles of Park Avenue Bohemia. For the fundamental trouble with "The Scoundrel" is that its own worst faults are just those features of current sophistication which it endeavors to satirize.

WILLIAM TROY

Contributors to This Issue

MORT and E. A. GILBERT are completing the manuscript of a book to be entitled "Life Insurance: A Legalized Swindle," from which their article in this issue is an excerpt.

PAUL W. WARD is a Washington correspondent of the Baltimore *Sun*.

MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE is known chiefly for her distinguished work as a photographer. A collection of her photographs of the Russian scene was published as a book, "Eyes on Russia."

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